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The Youth of To-Day in  
the Life of To-Morrow





# The Youth of To-Day in the Life of To-Morrow

By

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m. b. f. 11, Dec. 8. 23

*To my Son*  
*ELLSWORTH RUSSELL*





## Foreword

**T**HIS presentation of the forces that contribute to the furnishings of the youth of to-day for the life of to-morrow is the outgrowth of a practical touch with the groups of which this treatise deals. The consideration of the life of youth from the religious and Christian standpoint is intentional, for character is supreme among all life's assets, and the Church bears the message which alone can give the highest purpose.

It has not been my desire simply to write a book, but to bring an inspiration to those who labour to awaken and develop Christian character, that as the leaders of youth they may have optimistic courage for their task, and vision that shall not fail. The messages of these pages have come to me with insistent voices that would not be suppressed. Out of a heart that beats in unison with lovers of youth everywhere, I send these utterances forth. It is my earnest prayer that they who sail the craft of youth may hear the voice and catch the vision which bears to them the good purposes of God for their future, that their ship may not be stranded upon dangerous reefs or storm-driven to unfriendly shores, but may sail instead securely the charted seas of youthful years with spirit unafraid.

We have reason to be grateful to those who have with courageous spirit and prayerful research established a vital connection between the natural and the spiritual, thus making a clearer path for youth to travel than their fathers were forced to tread. The right of the young to such a rich inheritance cannot be denied. Personally, the author desires to express his indebtedness to the many sources of later day revelation which have simplified life's program and made possible clearer insight into the theme which he has treated in these pages.

HOWARD PALMER YOUNG.



## Contents

I.	THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH . . . .	11
II.	THE RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCES OF YOUTH	24
III.	THE RELATION OF THE CHURCH TO YOUNG LIFE . . . . .	39
IV.	THE HOME FACTOR IN ADOLESCENT RELIGION . . . . .	55
V.	THE RELIGIOUS PERVERSITIES OF YOUTH	70
VI.	THE PUBLIC SCHOOL AND THE RELIGIOUS LIFE . . . . .	84
VII.	THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE CHURCH SCHOOL . . . . .	99
VIII.	YOUNG PEOPLE ORGANIZED FOR SERVICE	114
IX.	THE COLLEGE AND ITS REACH . .	128✓
X.	HABITS AND AMUSEMENTS . . .	144
XI.	YOUTH AND THE COMMUNITY . .	161
XII.	YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE WORKING WORLD	178
XIII.	THE HEROES OF YOUTH . . .	195
XIV.	REACHING THE GOAL . . . .	210



## I

### THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH

**T**HE life of man has been divided into various periods, each of which challenges the attention and interest of the serious student of human nature. Such a division of the span of human life is common in both literature and science. Shakespeare makes one of his characters speak of the "seven ages of man,"—"the mewling infant;" "the whining schoolboy, creeping like a snail unwillingly to school;" "the lover, sighing like a furnace;" "the rough and bearded soldier;" "the portly middle-aged justice;" "the lean and slippered pantaloon;" and last of all, second childhood, "sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything." With more exact skill the scientist has classified human life into several divisions, including infancy, childhood, youth, and maturity.

Individual thinkers may disagree as to what period of life is most deserving of our paramount interest and study. The writer remembers a high school commencement address in which the speaker fixed the attention of his hearers at once by his opening sentence, "Of all the interesting things of life, the most interesting is a baby." For many years the interest of the civilized world has centered in the cradle life of mankind. Early child-

hood has claimed the attention of the parent, the pedagogue, and the preacher. That this study has been productive of much good to both the infant and adult cannot be denied. Little children are physically so beautiful, so full of idealistic charm in the unfolding mental life, and so responsive to moral teaching, that it is not strange that the artist and the poet have vied with each other in depicting the glory and beauty of the child, while the scholar and the moralist have cultivated the fields of childhood with the sincerest devotion.

While we would not minimize the importance of the care and cultivation of the little child, we can but note with satisfaction that the world in these modern times is manifesting an increasing interest in the child of older years. The educator and the parent have found in the life of the half-grown boy and girl a practically untilled field for their cultivation and development. It has been discovered that from this fountain of youth are flowing influences which will affect the life of to-morrow in a marked degree.

Scientific authorities indicate the years of the adolescent period as being from about the twelfth to the twenty-fourth year. This span of twelve years is subject to a division into three lesser periods, which—though not bound by hard and fast lines—correspond generally to the early period—twelve to fourteen years; the middle—fifteen to seventeen years; and the later—eighteen to twenty-four years.

The importance of the study of youth, and in-



deed of child life generally, may be understood at once when we consider how large a proportion of the race are found below the age of maturity. In the United States the total number of persons of public school age—from five to twenty years—according to the census of 1920, was 33,250,870. The activities of this great body of humanity challenge our admiration and enthusiasm; for here are found the larger number of the learners of life, a great proportion of its workers, its teachers, its soldiers, and its saints. Among those of the immature years the incipient leaders of the great conquests of the world in manual industry, science, literature, and religion, all find their place.

Some unknown writer has characterized youth as “a wide, deep river, dividing childhood from manhood; a river which, like the river of death, must be crossed without bridge or boat; through which each soul must go; into whose turbid waters the child must descend alone, knowing well that beneath their flood his childhood will be buried to rise no more; a stream both broad and turbulent, not to be crossed in a day or in a year; whose buoyant waters will indeed bear him up, but not without his efforts; whose currents will land him somewhere on the other shore; but, oh, so far down the stream on the dusty plains of sordid, sinful manhood, far out of sight of those green hills of childhood that were so near to heaven.” Into this realm of life, so fraught with possibilities, and so shrouded in mystery, which like an unexplored continent invites our attention and challenges our courage, we take our

journey. Knowing the vastness of the area and the variety of its products we are not surprised that the mental characteristics of youth are difficult to analyze and understand. The mind of man has been practically an uncharted continent until the researches of the psychologist came to our assistance. The maturer portion of humanity are still often puzzled to understand the strangely contradictory moods of the youth with whom they have to deal. One writer characterizes the years of young life as "the time of contradictions and anomalies," and says, "the fiercest radicalisms, and most dogged conservatisms, irrepressible gaiety, bitter melancholy—all these moods are a part of that showery springtime of life."

But whatever may be said about the peculiar moods of the young we find that these years are big with the imaginative element, and filled with visions of power and glory that reflect their halo over the coming years. Joseph, the favourite son of Jacob, the Hebrew patriarch, dreamed of the sun, moon, and stars making obeisance to him, and of his brothers' sheaves bowing to his in the field. The minds of the less imaginative elder brothers were impatient with the seeming folly of such visions, and the aged father reproved his favourite son for his idle dreaming.

Yet Joseph's dreams came true. And, quite unexpectedly to the commonplace adult life about them, young people are making real in the active work of the world their despised dreams of dominion and power. It is with some surprise that

educators have noted the youthful character of so great a number of the teachers in our common schools. Three hundred thousand teachers are employed in the rural and village schools of the United States. It is estimated that nearly sixty per cent of the coming generation of the country are being instructed by these rural and village teachers. A leading educator says, "An overwhelming majority of these 300,000 teachers have not passed the age of twenty-one; at least 100,000 of them are sixteen, seventeen, or eighteen years of age." In a county institute where 150 teachers were in session it was found on taking an age census that only seven of the number were over twenty-one years old. Doubtless a wider investigation would reveal a similar result. A consideration of these facts warrants the conclusion that youth have become the teachers of our children and are conserving for us an educational program which those of maturer years have neglected for other pursuits.

In the realm of physical prowess the youth of our land has likewise borne the heavy end of life's loads. Sufficient tribute can never be given to the willing workers of many family circles,—the unknown heroes and heroines of homespun character that have toiled to a vicarious extent in caring for the suffering, or lifting life's financial burdens. Many a person has come to the years of adult life with a broken constitution or shortage of educational training because in youth he carried burdens beyond his years. The intellectual sacrifices, the moral hurt, and the physical injuries which a great



war inflicts upon the youth of the land can only be appreciated by the thoughtful student of national conditions. The aftermath of destructiveness of human life which for many years followed the Civil War, and the present uprising against authority which characterizes the years following the world conflict, are grim reminders of the prices which youth has paid and will continue to pay as a part of the debt of war.

The spirit of adventure as well as the element of loyalty which is within the heart of the boy has caused him to be the first one to respond to the call of his country in time of war. It is startling, when we come to think of it, that our great national wars have been fought by the youth of the land. The records of the War Department show that in the Civil War about two and three-quarter millions of men were in the Union army. Of these over 100,000 were fifteen years of age and under, while over a million were in their eighteenth year or below. Less than 50,000 were above the age of twenty-five years. Going back to the colonial days we find that there were 100,000 fifteen-year-old boys in the Revolutionary War, while many were much younger. The World War found its first volunteers among the boys of high school and college age. The patriotic instinct seems especially strong in the years of youth. While youth is with us, patriotism will not die.

The heroism of youth has not been confined to the male sex. The recent war witnessed the going forth of multitudes of young women as nurses or

other helpers, even to the shell-torn first-line trenches. For years past the world has heard with heart-stirring interest the stories of Joan of Arc, who heartened a nation's army and led them forth to battle; of Florence Nightingale, the ministering angel of Crimea; of Grace Darling, who snatched the shipwrecked sailors from the slaughter of the sea; and later of Kate Shelley, the Iowa heroine, who braved the darkness and tempest to save a trainload of human beings from death in the turbulent river.

The world is full of conquerable difficulties, of easily won battles, and quickly solved problems—so great is the optimistic faith of the young. Where others hesitate he treads with steady step, and where the faltering hand of older years would fail, the firm and fearless grasp of youth often wins surprising victories. The poet who sang the praise of the majority age of youth with a few master strokes pictures the possibilities of the young:

“The world delights, the world invites,  
When you are twenty-one,  
The forests wave their arms to you,  
The waters sing sweet songs to you,  
The breezes blow perfumes to you,  
When you are twenty-one.

“The world commands, the world demands,  
When you are twenty-one,  
Ideals to right the wrongs of it,  
Strong hands to do the work of it,  
And love to warm the heart of it,  
When you are twenty-one.”

It is the beckoning hands of these alluring possibilities which cause the youth with quickening heart-beat to hasten toward life's goals. Realizing that he is no longer a child, he will look forward to the forming of a home of his own and the means of a livelihood. The age of romance is upon him and the choosing of a life partner is his joyful and necessary privilege.

The period of later adolescence is recognized by medical authorities as the proper time for marriage. The mutual attraction of the sexes, however, begins much earlier, and the choice of a helpmeet is often made before the youth reaches his majority. The records of the United States census show that the number of married females between the ages of fifteen and nineteen years is over ten times as great as among males. In the years between twenty and twenty-four the per cent of married males is twenty-four, while the per cent of married females is more than double the number. Some conflicting opinions are found concerning the proper period for human mating. One writer recommends not more than three generations to the century, while another is equally positive in advocating not more than two. Prof. Roswell H. Johnson says that the intellectual classes marry later, and the race deteriorates as a result. Dr. Charles W. Eliot says that "postponed marriage is a great modern evil in educated society." The peculiar ways of Cupid are not easily regulated by the scientist, however, and the statistician can present no tabulation concerning youth's heart stories; but human experience demon-



strates that the days of love and courtship, if not the actual time of mating, are located well within the period which we study. The age of youth is preëminently the age of fast friendships and lasting loves.

The occupation of the youth is often selected much earlier than his life companion. Even before his teens his eye is fixed upon some guiding star in the great expanse of business or professional life. In vain may parental authority struggle to prevent Isaac Watts from becoming a poet, to make John Jacob Astor a butcher, or Schiller a surgeon, or Handel a lawyer, or to discourage Benjamin West from following the artistic bent,—the youthful choice prevails.

The deductions of Lancaster concerning the age at which professional characters develop their successes is interesting data relative to the preëminence of youth as the period of great accomplishments. While in some occupations it was found that success was not reached until in later life, he shows that of one hundred actors the average of their first success was eighteen years,—from sixteen to twenty years being the prominent period; of fifty-three artists, ninety per cent showed talent before twenty, the average being a little more than seventeen years; in the case of one hundred and eighteen scientists the fires of talent began to glow before the age of nineteen; while of one hundred musicians ninety-five showed exceptional talent before sixteen, and the average age of marked ability was less than ten years in this talent,—which is the

most precocious of all. No doubt the early choices of these life occupations and the marked success which came to the youth who followed them were the result of some secret message of adaptability written upon the individual heart, or some vision of service which meditative moments had revealed.

The normal visions of youth are full of desire for nobility and the higher things of life. The desire to do, to achieve, to conquer, is an intrinsic element of adolescence. Even such souls as Helen Keller, whom an unkind fate seemed to have destined for an earth-bound existence, can say, "While I walk with unsteady steps in my chamber, my spirit sweeps skyward on eagle wings and looks out with unquenchable vision upon a world of eternal beauty."

It is this capacity for the spiritual that makes the period of youth such a fruitful one for religious cultivation. Both childhood and youth manifest the keenest interest in the spiritual life. The child that does not very early in life under encouraging environment show this trait of character must be considered as abnormal.

The recognition of this characteristic has caused the Church to have a new kindling of interest in the religion of the adolescent. This awakening has come almost simultaneously with the vision of youth's new value in the intellectual and physical realms of life. This new discovery has been brought about in part at least by the tabulation of certain facts of individual Christian experience which show beyond a doubt that the larger number

of decisive religious awakenings take place before the age of twenty. Researches have also proven that there are three well marked periods of religious awakening—the first at about the age of twelve or thirteen,—the second at sixteen or seventeen, and the third at about twenty years. Such tangible evidence makes clear the fact that the beginnings of the Christian life—when a definite date may be discovered in the individual experience—are most frequently within the period of adolescence. Youth is quite appropriately the time of religious decisions as it is also the time of life's other great choices.

The paradoxical character of this period of "storm and stress" makes it also possible to find within these years the elements of insubordination and moral delinquency. Not only does the youth go up to the temple to seek the things of his Father, but the younger son—the prodigal—wanders into the far country to spend his substance in riotous living. It sometimes happens that the tendency to doubt breaks out in virulent form, and certain long-accepted truths are suddenly thrown into the youth's intellectual scrap heap. Especially is this true if the environment at all favours such a mental state. A number of years ago the precocious son of an eastern college professor, while discoursing of things ordinarily beyond the years of youth, said to a group of adult associates, "I know no God,—I have never seen Him,—no one has seen Him. There is no such a being." Such abnormality may cling to the life and ruin it forever un-



less it is met by some influence that leads the youth back to the Christian revelation.

The juvenile courts have furnished abundant evidence of the prevalence of youthful crime, as religious agencies have likewise indicated the possibility of religious experience in childhood and youth. A recent authority balances one fact against the other in the following words: "In the strategic years between twelve and twenty occur sixty-eight per cent of first crimes and seventy per cent of all conversions." Some years ago the writer obtained from a personal friend,—an old penitentiary chaplain,—a tabulation of the convicts in his institution. Out of a total of a little over three thousand, more than sixteen hundred were below the age of twenty-five. The venerable clergyman remarked, "Most of the crimes are committed when the criminals are from eighteen to twenty-five years of age." His exhortation is still timely: "Take care of the boys—especially take care of the boys. You have boys in your homes, in your schools, on your streets, who will be in the penitentiary in a few years. Their kind are there now, and these will be if you don't look out. They are coming nearly every day. The age from fifteen to twenty determines character and destiny."

Thus do we find that the fountain of youth is the source from which life's currents are perennially renewed. The searcher for an invigorating stream which shall make new his personal powers may be disappointed in his quest; but the student of

life's problems who seeks to find the power by which the social life may defeat stagnation and death will cherish humanity's youthful years as the saving salt which has not yet lost its savour. The years of youth have within them the potentiality that can build a temple of character to stand among the mansions eternal in the city never built with hands, or blast the fairest flowers that grow in the sacred gardens of life.

Once, when a child, I was entertained with my parents in the home of an aged man whose early residence had been beside the sea. Among the objects of interest calculated to amuse the childish fancy, was a large prism which had been a part of the equipment of a lighthouse on the coast. Holding it up to look through, all the objects upon which the eye rested were bordered with beautiful rainbow colours. Thus the vision of youth may behold every common task and every untrodden path framed in the unbraided strands of pristine glory. As leaders of the young it is your task and mine so to set the prism that from the better ways and higher things of life the rainbow shall not fade, that those entrusted to our care may have light to guide them safely till manhood's day has dawned.

## II

### THE RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCES OF YOUTH

**T**HE poet has sung, "The thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts." We are reminded early in our study of the difficulty under which those of maturer years labour in interpreting the experiences of the young. The years that have intervened between childhood and age have changed the hue of some of the events of earlier days, and it must be admitted that we speak with less certain knowledge than those of younger years might speak if they could have some of the advantages of maturity to aid them in expressing their "long, long thoughts." The ideal history of the religious life of the adolescent can probably be written only by the youth himself. However, with the limitations which surround us it is probable that an analysis of some of the outstanding features of the adolescent religious experience may not be without considerable value to many who have long "worked in the dark" with the young people entrusted to their care. It may likewise prove of help to the youth who seeks to understand himself.

The one who attempts to analyze any subject



with scientific accuracy will discover some things which do not agree with the theories he may have previously held regarding the matter investigated. A scientific consideration of the subject demands that the facts be ascertained first and the theory be deduced from the facts. Many of the ideas of a former age concerning the religion of childhood and youth were based upon previously constructed theories. Such a predetermined attitude is destructive to the real understanding of the character of Christian things as well as of any other experience in life.

A primary cause of misunderstandings regarding the religious life of youth is to be found in a failure on the part of those in a past age to understand youth itself. In earlier years both the scientist and the theologian recognized no intermediate condition of life between childhood and maturity. All children were considered children until they were fully grown. The manner of the treatment and training of the growing youth was not particularly different from that given the child of more tender years.

Though some distinction was made between the child and the adult,—in that the child was under some restraints and often subject to almost impossible standards of obedience and servility,—he was yet regarded by many as a miniature adult. Whatever was good for the adult was thought to be good for the child. In intellectual life, in physical activities, and in spiritual gifts he was supposed to be but a small sized edition of his elders.

An examination of old portraits and paintings, as well as written records, reveals the fact that even the costumes of children did not differ from adults. Going back as far as the sixteenth century we find little children of both sexes of the well-to-do classes, even at a very tender age, dressed in stiffly-stayed costumes and costly jewels, with the restrictions of life which such conditions would entail. During the period intervening—up to more modern times—the true spirit of childhood was looked upon with distrust and suspicion. An authority on educational conditions in the eighteenth century says, “The dancing master was the most important factor in the whole educational situation. His function was to make little children into young ladies and gentlemen as expeditiously as possible.”

When we enter the circle of those whose interest in childhood was religious we find similar conceptions. It was in accord with the prevailing ascetic type of the Church that the seemingly frivolous things of childhood should be laid aside by the one professing godliness, no matter what his years might be. Francke, of Halle, a man of considerable note in educational and philanthropic lines, in the eighteenth century, said:

“Play must be forbidden in any and all of its forms. The children must be instructed in such a manner as to show them, through the presentation of religious principles, the wastefulness and folly of all play. They shall be led to see that play will distract their minds from God, the Eternal Good, and will work nothing but harm to their spiritual lives.”

The austere manner in which little children were instructed in colonial times is revealed by Cotton Mather's account of his dealing with his little daughter in matters pertaining to her spiritual welfare. It should be remembered that the child was only four years of age at the time of this serious deliverance:

"I took my little daughter Katy into my Study, and then I told my child that I am to dye Shortly and she must, when I am dead remember Everything I now said unto her. I set before her the Sinful Condition of her Nature, and I charged her to pray in Secret Places every day that God for the sake of Jesus Christ would give her a new Heart. I gave her to understand that when I am taken from her she must look to meet with more humbling afflictions than she does now she has a Tender Father to provide for her."

It cannot be said that we are yet free from the idea that in religious matters the child and the adult are still upon the same foundation. Religion is still thought of as an adult proposition, and instead of reading the words of the Master, "Except ye turn and become as little children," we are prone to think, if not to say to the child, "Except ye turn, and become as an adult, ye shall not enter the kingdom." The right of the child and the youth to begin the religious life on his own footing is not yet wholly secured. The misguided apostles who forbade parents to bring their children to Christ for His blessing, have found some succes-



sors among those who ignorantly reach forth their hands to hinder the advancing youth who desires to confess Christ for himself.

The experience of a minister which was told in a Toronto preachers' meeting a few years ago can doubtless be duplicated in many instances. The minister said, "When I was a little boy, about ten years of age, I attended a revival meeting and was much affected by the preaching. One evening, in response to a fervent appeal, I went forward and knelt at the altar. I felt that I really wanted to give my heart to God. After I had been kneeling for a while, one of the stewards of the church came and laid his hand on my shoulder and said: 'Little boy, when you get bigger and older you will know what this means. Just sit on one of the side pews and make room for the older people.' My heart was broken, and I went away from the church, never to have any further religious feelings for years. This experience accounts for the fact that I did not join the church until after I was twenty-one."

The error of the personal misunderstanding of the child's religious aspirations is associated with a misconception concerning his theological status. Certain theoretical ideas of the inherited nature of sin have long held sway within the Church, which have influenced conclusions concerning the salvation of the children and the youth. It is with reluctance that the crude thought of the moral responsibility of infants has been abandoned. The echo of a dismal theology which spoke of "infants

in hell not more than a span long," is still heard.  
The couplet

" In Adam's fall  
We sinned all,"

even though matched by the absurdly facetious  
couplet

" In Cain, his murder,  
We sinned funder,"

represents a theological notion that in a past generation has demanded of little children a compliance with forms of repentance and religious acceptance which are only adapted to adult life.

Although our subject does not deal directly with the small child, the relations of childhood and youth are such that we cannot avoid considering in some degree the relation of infants and small children to the Kingdom of Christ. As the religion of youth is indebted for its beginning to the years previous to adolescence, some brief consideration of the abstruse question of "original sin" seems quite necessary.

A gradual change of thought concerning the question "Is the child born regenerate?" is traceable in the statements of theologians. From the extreme notion that all infants were born in a state of sin, as a result of an evil inheritance, we have reached the place where,—either through baptism, or a mysterious election, or a kind provision of grace,—(as one writer says) "the child at birth is met by the benefits of Christ's atonement and

placed in a state of salvation,"—so that by a large proportion of the Christian Church the child is now accepted as a member of the Kingdom of Christ.

It is true that there are yet some who have not grasped the idea that the child has a birthright inheritance in the Kingdom of God. Not long ago certain statements of religious belief adopted by a considerable body of Christians contained this statement concerning the relation of mankind to inherited sin: "We believe that this spiritual death, or total corruption of human nature, has been transmitted to the entire race of man, the man Christ Jesus alone excepted; and hence that every child of Adam is born into the world with a nature which not only possesses no spark of Divine life, but is essentially and unchangeably bad, being enmity against God, and incapable by any educational process whatever of subjection to His law."

As a directly opposite definition of the child's relation to God the recent statement of a leading churchman seems to be a fair presentation of the modern view of the case: "Children do not begin life in alienation from God, but through the unconditional and universal benefits of Christ's atoning redemption, begin as God's children, and as such belong to the Kingdom of God; and being so related to God are entitled to be regarded as His children and by all care and nurture and guidance and protection to be kept in the kingdom to which they belong through Christ's grace at birth."

Added to the mature conclusions of the theologian concerning the status of the child in the



things of grace, we have certain important inferences which the scientist has gathered to aid us in our knowledge of youth's religious life. The recent teachers of religious psychology, through patient investigation, have brought to light so many facts in their researches in personal experience that we are now treading upon solid ground, no longer hindered by the fogs of theological discussion, in our efforts to classify the religious experiences of men. The mental states and emotional conditions of the whole period of adolescence have been gone over, and the results of such surveys are considered of marked value by those who to-day are earnestly endeavouring to accomplish the best in the Christian training of youth.

As a basis for our consideration of the characteristics of the adolescent religious life, we may take the words of Prof. Norman E. Richardson:

“There are three outstanding types of experiences that are seen in the religious unfolding of the adolescent life. One is dominantly volitional; another is emotional; and the third is intellectual. At the dawn of early adolescence, the child is supremely interested in doing religious things. At sixteen, religious experiences affect his emotions, particularly. At nineteen, or later, his religious interest centers in beliefs, doctrines, theology, creeds.”

It must be understood that certain varying conditions of personal life, and differing degrees of natural development forbid us to make a time-table for each changing characteristic in any religious

experience. It should be considered also, that, as Prof. Richardson says, "The majority of young people do not have a completed adolescence."

It will be remembered that the first natural period which has been assigned for the personal religious awakening, or "conversion" of the youth, is the age of twelve years. Even Jewish traditional practices accord with this idea, for it was at this age that the Jewish boy became "a son of the law." The boy Jesus went up to the temple at the age of twelve, tarrying there under the Divine compulsion that He "must be about the things of His Father." The examination of many cases of religious experience show an awakening at about this age, but the preponderance of statistics has seemed to indicate that the beginning of the middle period (sixteen in the case of boys, and fourteen or fifteen in the case of girls) has revealed a larger per cent of conversions. Concerning this matter, however, Prof. George Albert Coe says:

"Contrary to my former view, and to the view of Starbuck, I am convinced that early rather than middle adolescence is the more important turning point. Conversions that occur at sixteen and seventeen seem to me to represent cases in which development of the religious sense did not proceed normally during the preceding four or five years; they are essentially an effort to 'catch up.'"

The many instances of a desire upon the part of the children just reaching adolescence to confess Christ and unite with the church, as well as certain social and physical changes which occur at this

time, indicate this as the normal period for a spiritual crisis. The fact that it does not reveal itself in a conversion experience is often due to adult interference for which parents and teachers are morally responsible. Where conversions do occur at this early age they are probably not as emotional as those of middle adolescence. Religion appears to the child of this age more as a thing to use, rather than a creed to believe. His life is one of activity, and religion must be activity or it is nothing to him.

A fine manifestation of the religious instinct was noted in a boy of my acquaintance who sought to induce a boy from a poor family to attend Sunday school. Both boys were about fourteen years of age. The one who was solicited said, "But I have no clothes." His new found friend started out with a subscription paper and in response to his boyish appeals among the church people, was soon able to provide a comfortable outfit for the forlorn chap. Thus the boy from this unchurched family was brought into the Sunday school, with the result of a beneficent religious influence upon the remainder of the family as well. Such is the type of early adolescent religion. Would that the Church might learn from "the child in the midst."

The instance illustrates also that the religion of youth is enamoured with the sense of reality. With all the fun-loving propensities that belong to the period, life is never more real and earnest than to the growing boy and girl. Youth has no respect for religious sham, and no keener discernment of



unreality and hypocrisy may be found in adult life than many adolescent youngsters exhibit. That peculiar type of religio-philosophy which considers sin, sickness, and death as unreal, furnishes little attraction for the normal youth, but gathers its devotees from the maturer portion of humanity on whom the delights of the sense life have begun to pall.

Not only do the things of sense have real value to youth, but the finer spiritual values are cherished as well. In the middle years it may seem as if the boy and girl are strangely careless concerning the gifts and caresses heaped upon them, but their stolidity is after all only a seeming. Love, and friendship, and the finer things of life, have the highest values to the growing youth, though he may not express his feelings. The period is one of strong friendships, chumships, and cliques. The thought of Christianity as a friendship takes especial hold on young life at this time. Loyalty, heroism, and fellowship are the elements in a Christian life that make a strong appeal to youth, and they are to him the vital purposes in Christian living.

Perhaps there is no better index to the prevailing religious emotions of youth than their confessions as to "favourite hymns." A few years ago a Hartford professor, Dr. Aris Knight, sent out a questionnaire asking a large number of young people this question: "What is your favourite hymn?" Though the classification of ages (ten to twenty) does not admit of much distinction between those

of adolescent and preadolescent years, the results of the questionnaire are quite suggestive. "Onward, Christian Soldiers" was the first choice, representing one hundred and eight out of a total of the six hundred and twenty-four who replied. "Nearer, My God, to Thee," stood second in the list, and "I Love to Tell the Story," was third, while other choice hymns follow. The ideals of heroism, fellowship, and service stand out in these hymns as characteristic of the heart ambitions of youth.

It is during the years of adolescence also that youth seeks for himself a firm footing in the things of personal faith. He is often assailed by doubts of dangerous form, and many spiritual wrecks are due to the attempt of unwise parents and teachers to implant ancient notions in modern minds. I can well remember that stubborn resistance which I felt it necessary to put up as boy to maintain the "faith once delivered." Sheltered from the cold blasts of skepticism, I had reached the age of sixteen before having thrown into my face by a skeptical boarder in the family a doubt regarding the historical character of the creation narrative of the Bible. It was the beginning of a long battle,—the things of traditional religious faith against the more modern thought of scientific men,—fought out upon the silent battle-fields of my own heart, which college years and manhood's maturer faith could only settle.

Thus do the experiences of youth run the gamut from the unreasoning faith of childhood, over high

mountain tops of joy, into deep vales of doubt, to the clear plains of manhood faith. We note also that the beginnings of the religious faith of youth are variable as well. With some there seems to have been no day or date when they were conscious of any acceptance of Christ, and likewise no day when they rejected Him. When favourable opportunity came they joined the church, but they do not date their religious life from that date. With others, a definite day came, when either alone or in the company of others, they publicly made known their decision to "follow Christ." This experience was usually not specially marked with emotion; only a comfortable sense of having "done right," was the prevailing conviction. Others yet—having been brought up with the theological notion that when they "reached the years of accountability," they must have an experience of conversion of the emotional type, have sought and found such an experience. Of the various types, the first and second are probably the most common to-day. Doubtless the ideal is represented by the child who knows not the hour of wilful departure from the Father's house. This does not mean that the child is morally faultless, and the forgiveness of sin unnecessary, nor does it indicate that the grace of God is not operative in the life of the child that through education and environment retains his spiritual heritage.

Side by side with those who in youth have professed their faith in Christ in the manner outlined, will ever be those who have returned to the Father's



house after years of wandering in sin. These, like the prodigal, have forfeited their birthright for the pottage of the world, and have returned again to find the grace of God able to save. Some of these may yet be within the years of youth, but the character of their religious transformation will probably be of the type of the more mature. While the Church must ever seek to win the wanderer, we must believe that the normal type of Christian experience is represented by those ever kept within the fold. The two types of Christian experience may be illustrated in some degree by the climactic conversion of Saul of Tarsus, with the flaming light, the heavenly voice and the vision of the risen Christ; and the far different, but fully as effective experience of Timothy, whose spiritual life had its beginnings at a mother's knee. The apostle of the Damascus road conversion becomes the friend and fellow-worker of the youth who had an inheritance of faith from godly Lois, and faithful Eunice. Thus may even those of differing religious experience to-day sing from the heart a similar song of praise to the redeeming Christ. The experience of one may be:

“ You ask me why I gave my heart to Christ?

I can reply;

It is a wondrous story; listen while

I tell you why.

My heart was drawn at length to see His face.

I was alone, I had no resting place;

I heard of how He loved me, with a love

Of depths so great—of heights so far above

All human ken.  
I longed such love to share,  
And sought it then  
Upon my knees in prayer."

And the experience of the other is told:

" You ask me when I gave my heart to Christ?  
I cannot tell  
Just when His blessing first my sense befell;  
I know full well  
That long ago, when but a child,  
And all this earth before me brightly smiled,  
His bride, my mother taught me that in all,  
This precious love, He bade me " Father " call,  
I do not know  
'Tis He alone can tell you when;  
I only know  
As babe seeks breast I sought Him then."

### III

## THE RELATION OF THE CHURCH TO YOUNG LIFE

THE new awakening of the Church to the value of the religion of youth is the most significant religious discovery of modern times. While in the past certain bodies of the Protestant Church have paid some attention to the religious nurture of the young, there has never been such a determined effort to save the coming generation as is now being inaugurated in the Christian Church. We can but earnestly hope that the former carelessness concerning the vital question of youth's religious training will soon be replaced with a general program of Christian nurture which will lead the young life in safe and certain moral paths.

That the Church has very largely failed in the religious nurture of the child is a conclusion which requires no argument to demonstrate. No doubt we have often been confronted with the question, Can the Church perpetuate itself from its own family circles? The old commandment speaks of the iniquity of the fathers reaching to the third and fourth generation; but there are doubtless large divisions of the Church which must plead guilty to failure in thus perpetuating righteousness. A pastor argued before his official board the need of the

Church's deeper interest in youth, and asked the question, "If the leaders of this church were suddenly removed by death or change of residence, would the work of this church be carried on and supported by their descendants?" An elderly member of the board,—all but one of whose six adult children were outside of the church,—shook his head as he sadly answered, "No." Other members of the board,—one of whom was a woman with ten irreligious sons,—could give no other answer.

✕ The methods formerly employed by the Church to secure and save its youth have evidently been at fault, or such failures would not constantly confront us. Why failure has thus met us can be easily accounted for when we think how cursory and intermittent have been our efforts for the salvation of the young. To a great degree the Church has depended on the annual revival service as the ingathering of souls for the year,—the intensity of which has resulted in an uplift to the Church and usually produced some fruit in the conversion of both old and young. The spiritual activities suited to youth's need during the remainder of the year have consisted largely in the work of the Sunday school where the teaching has been of the most unskillful sort. In countless individual cases young people have left the Sunday school in the most vital years of life, and drifted from the church, with no well directed efforts to prevent their departure. The "wild oats" period of life has ensued,—for many years complacently accepted as a necessary



accompaniment of youth's years. The return of the revival season has witnessed but a tithe of these wasted souls gathered in, possibly only to a fitful and uncertain spiritual life, with many of those thus converted returning again to the more alluring ways of sin.

The apology for such spiritual tragedies has been a firmly fixed belief that Satan had foreclosed a mortgage on the human race, and the inference was not wanting that the power of redemption was not sufficient to overcome his nefarious designs. But with the dawning of a better day, we find the Church with hopeful determination reaching out to save the youth everywhere. — In thus saving the youth the Church will save itself, for only youth's courage and sacrifice can secure the ultimate triumph of Christ's kingdom.

Some hint is given concerning the relation of youth to the Church's victorious faith in the writings of a Christian of the second century, whose words were much revered by the disciples of that early day. Pastor Hermas,—as he was called,—saw an aged woman, with every evidence of weakness and infirmity, sitting on a chair. He was told that this woman represented the Church. After this he saw a strong woman, in the life of maturity, who was superintending the erection of a great tower upon the waters, with multitudes of workmen employed. This woman also represented the Church. Last of all, he saw a beautiful young woman, a perfect type of health and womanly grace, and lo! she was the Church. Seeking the ex-

planation, he was told that the changing vision illustrated the condition of his own faith concerning the Church. When it was weak, the Church likewise was weak; when it increased, the Church grew in power and activity, but the highest vision came when with the eye of faith he saw in her great beauty and youthfulness the prophecy of her wonderful future.

The Master Himself set great store by the thought that the place of young life in the kingdom was important. As a sample of the ideal inhabitant of His kingdom, He placed "the child in the midst." True, He did not despair of the most sinful, but of those who were very far away He seems to have reached but a few—one woman of sin at a wayside well, and one thief who companioned with Him on the cross. Crowds of children, however, thronged Him to seek His blessing, and filled the temple courts to sing His praise. His disciples were chosen from the young, and only two aged men are spoken of as being among His friends—Joseph of Arimathæa, who gave his garden as the burial place of the crucified Christ, and Nicodemus, who brought his gift of fragrant spices after Jesus was dead. Eager and willing are the feet of youth to follow Him, and slow are the aged to seek His favour.

As in the beginning, so to-day, the hope of the Church is in laying the foundations of faith in childhood and youth. We do not doubt that the power of Divine grace, combined with the God-given human will, can overcome—through stern

struggles—the influence of an evil heredity and the habits of years of indulgence in sin; but we are certain that the easier moulding of character is accomplished when the life is fresher from the hand of God. Nature teaches lessons that the Church cannot despise.

“I took a piece of plastic clay  
And fondly fashioned it one day,  
And as my fingers pressed it still,  
It moved and yielded to my will.

“I came again when the days were past;  
The bit of clay was hard at last.  
The form I gave it still it bore,  
But I could change that form no more.

“I took a piece of living clay  
And gently formed it day by day,  
And moulded with my power and art  
A young child's soft and yielding heart.

“I came again when years were gone;  
It was a man I looked upon;  
He still that early impress wore  
And I could change him nevermore.”

It cannot be denied that this conception of the Church's responsibility for the spiritual ideals of the coming generation brings a wider program of moral endeavour before us. If there ever was a time when the Church could excuse the weakness of its efforts for the salvation of youth on the ground that only a few were to be saved—a Divinely chosen number from an unregenerate world,—it can now no longer rest in such complacency. The



obligation is to save all. And, unlike the plastic clay which may be fashioned in a moment and set in the sun to dry into permanent shape, no stereotyped moral condition can be produced by religious endeavour, and constant care and training are necessary for the preservation of high ideals and true character. The Church cannot concern itself unduly with the dates of religious experience,—soul-cheering as they may be with their richness of emotional memories. It must think of religious life as a *state*, rather than a *date*,—a condition ever present, rather than a basket of yesterday's manna, which becomes corrupted with the lapse of time.

Building upon the consciousness of the child's right to the kingdom—the realization of the truth of the Master's declaration that “of such is the kingdom of heaven”—the Church has taken up a new mission of revealing to the child his relation to the Heavenly Father and his inheritance to things eternal. We are now engaged not only in rescuing as many as possible from lives of sin, but we are trying to prevent the loss of those who previously were allowed to wander away from their first estate of childhood grace. Christian workers are sometimes misunderstood as they carry out this program of character formation. A junior worker said to her pastor, “Some folks say to me concerning the children in my department as I try to teach them prayer and the other elements of the Christian life, ‘Have these children had a change of heart?’ What am I to say to them?” The pastor replied,



“Tell them that is exactly what you are trying to prevent. Tell them that your work is an effort to see that they shall not be changed by the evil environment and lack of Christian nurture from the faith of childhood to a life which is sinful and corrupt.”

The modern Church needs not so much to worry over the seeming lack of the child or young person to experience theological propositions, as to be concerned whether it is doing its part to secure for the youth in its care its religious rights in practical and personal piety. It is unquestionably true that religious life is the result of personal choice, but the efforts of the Church may be so well directed that youth will never think of an adverse spiritual decision when it comes to any forking of life's ways.

It is undeniably true that the Church formerly dealt unwisely with the religious life of childhood and youth. Doubtless some revival movements have done great harm to the after life of the child by the unintelligent manner in which the claims of Christ upon personal life were presented during the junior and intermediate years. A thoughtful student of the religious nature of the child cannot but have doubts concerning the method of evangelistic presentation to children recommended by a foremost “children's evangelist” of some years since, whose plan has doubtless been used by a great many other workers with children. He says, concerning the preacher's message:

“He must dwell on the sufferings of Christ until

the children see Him vividly crucified before them. They must see the crown of thorns upon His brow. They must see the heavy lashes laid upon His bare, bleeding back. They must hear the shout of the mob as they cry, 'Away with Him! Crucify Him!' They must see the cross laid upon His bleeding, quivering form, and then follow Him as He bears it along the Via Dolorosa. They must hear the heavy mallet, as with blow after blow the nails pierce His hands and feet. . . . They should be called upon to listen to at least some of the seven sorrowful cries which He uttered as He hung upon the cross; and when the cry reaches their ears, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' they should be taught that He was forsaken that they might not be forsaken; that all these sufferings, especially His soul sufferings, . . . were endured in their stead. . . . Especially should great stress be laid upon the doctrine of substitution. Children as young as five and six years of age can understand this doctrine, if it is illustrated in a simple manner."

The effect of such a presentation upon the child is inclined to produce an unreal and often morbid type of Christianity; and, it is to be feared, to contribute in no small degree to the great number of "backsliders" which meet us whenever we come to investigate individually our field of Christian service. Because of the after effects of such methods it were well that the matter of evangelistic preaching to children receive a more intelligent treatment than it has been given in the thought of Christian workers.

But has the revival service no message for the children and the youth? Yes,—for the smaller child it has the message of the Fatherhood of God,

and their inheritance in the things of the kingdom. For the older child, a clear presentation of Jesus as a Friend, an appeal to the pledge of loyalty and service which He requires. For the youth who has wandered away from a childhood state of grace, all the Scripture which applies to the sinful soul and its need of repentance and regeneration is as applicable as to the adult. But the message of the Church must be in accord with the hearer's vocabulary, and not in the shibboleths of mature theological conceptions.

Of all the marvels of the day of Pentecost to the astonished multitudes none is more suggestive in its modern application than that referred to in the query, "How hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?" The Pentecostal results for which the Church hopes can only be secured by the same method. The Church that to-day speaks the vernacular of youth is succeeding in making the Gospel plain to the hearts of the young. And Pentecost results are crowning such efforts. One great religious denomination reports that for the past ten years the number of accessions to membership from its Sunday schools has averaged enough to amount to over three thousand for every Sunday of each year! A veritable Pentecost of Divine power,—though without the accompaniment of the "rushing of a mighty wind"—yet with the same still, small voice and all-pervading fire!

The common tongue of youth is the language of activity. It manifests itself in a religious way in



deeds of helpfulness,—in quiet services of the sort which do not let the left hand know what the right hand is doing. It also finds an outlet in romping games, athletics, and often in feverish endeavours to find an entertaining thrill after the manner not approved by older and wiser folk. A church which accepts the social and recreational life as a part of youth's natural existence has caught the accent of its speech, and will have little difficulty in imparting its other messages to the ears and hearts of the young.

A veritable revolution has come to the Church in very recent years in regard to its interest in the physical and recreational side of young life. In conducting round-table discussions of the play question at various young people's conventions I have used a questionnaire covering the church and community play life, in order to get a local view of the neighbourhoods from which the delegates came. The answers given to the question, "Does your church, young people's society, or Sunday school, interest themselves in athletics?" formerly indicated quite a general lack of any church provision for or interest in such sports. Only a few years have passed, and a change is now quite noticeable. Many churches are built with provision for gymnasium work and athletic events, and recreation directors are now being employed in both city and country parishes. Where such facilities are not yet provided, play and athletics are finding their place in the church's open air program during the favourable months of the year, and ministers are in



demand who can carry out such activities for the youth of the community.

The dedication of a new gymnasium in St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church at Cedar Rapids, Iowa, is typical of the newly acknowledged connection between the athletic life and practical Christianity. In the dedication of the fine new church edifice it seemed fitting that some recognition of the connection of the gymnasium with the service activities of the church should be made, and the following beautiful and significant responsive service was used:

"For the entertainment of our children and youth in healthful games and sports under wholesome Christian influences,

"We dedicate this gymnasium.

"For the development of strong bodies, clear brains, and clean morals,

"We dedicate this gymnasium.

"For the training of our young people to win victories without boasting, and to accept defeat without chagrin,

"We dedicate this gymnasium.

"For the training of our young people in self-control, in coöperation, in team work, that in all life we may help one another, and be workers together with God,

"We dedicate this gymnasium.

"For the development of strong, healthy, cheerful, well-rounded, vigorous Christian lives,

"We dedicate this gymnasium.

"For the glory of God and the exalting of Jesus Christ in all the life of our young people,

"We dedicate this gymnasium."

With the recreational life of the young thus dedicated to God, we shall not fear the separation of the play life from the things ordinarily counted serious and religious. The church that thus associates the life of play with the life of piety cannot help being attractive to youth. With the interest in play, however, must come a serious endeavour to fill our place as teachers of the elements of personal religious faith. The Bible class must not be neglected for the baseball field. Youth is not averse to learning, but rather eager for the truth. The Church has never had a clearer call to a teaching ministry than now. Doubtless the recognition of this need has caused the modern minister to change the style of his pulpit message to the direct and conversational address, rather than the orotund delivery so common a generation ago.

The educational agencies which the Church employs in carrying out its program of training were never more varied than now. The multiplicity of organizations and plans is our great danger. In the preparation of the menu for the satisfaction of the moral palate of youth, there are sometimes so many cooks in the kitchens that they tread upon each other. A prominent young people's leader in the Methodist Church notes that there are thirteen different organizations in that church each with a program of missionary instruction for the children and youth from eight to twenty-five years of age. In the event of such overlapping endeavours it will be necessary to limit the educational program of the average church to a very

few of the organized agencies, and see that their fields of service cover the needs of the youth without duplication of effort.

The Sunday school has long held an honoured place in the Church's work for youth. With the new plans of departmental organization, systematically graded courses, and trained teaching force, the church school has entered on a new era of religious usefulness. The young people's society, with its splendid program of worship and service activities has large possibilities for the training of the Christian life of youth. Missionary organizations—though confining their endeavours too largely to the female sex—are contributing to a more social type of Christianity. Various clubs, tribes, and troops, semi-religious in character, fill a real need in the life of the intermediate boy and girl. With unified leadership on the part of the local church, and a division of fields of service, all may become parts of a system of training which shall give a well-rounded character to the coming Christian generation.

Whatever its organized activities for youth may be, the Church will not fulfill its place as a moral and religious educational agency if it makes use of such agencies in a mechanical or passive way. All ideas of educational effort which represent the educator as a well-filled tank and the pupil as an empty bucket, with the organization or program as an animated pump handle, are inefficient and false. The young person demands that he shall have a part in the process; and real education—in re-



ligion and morals, as well as in secular subjects—is a process of bringing out, rather than pouring in. The youth must find in his teacher a director, rather than a dictator. The churches that allow and encourage their young people to an active participation in the work of the church find a steady growth and development on the part of the youth. Let us learn from our public schools in these matters, where debating teams, athletic events, etc., are strictly student endeavours. When the young people's society is *of* and *for* and *by* young people, it will prosper better than if it be “young” in name only. Young people grow by that stretch of soul or sinew which comes from taking up tasks which belong to the life in which they seek to develop.

With the provision of a church program for our youth that is comprehensive enough to afford all-round development, there will come—and it has already begun to appear—a new type of Christian life. It may not express its experiences in the cherished phrases of former days; it may not be as dogmatic about some matters of theological formula; it will not be quite as emotional as some of the religious life of yesterday, but like the faith of the fathers it will have deep purposes, holy zeal, warm hearts, and willing hands, and the world will believe in it because it will remind them of the Master who has inspired His Church to proclaim it in these days.

A beautiful tribute to such a life was given by the father of Richard Fearing Dawes, when the young man met an untimely death at Lake Geneva,



a few years ago. After summing up his devotion to his comrades in an engineering camp where all were stricken with malignant typhoid fever, and telling how the boy came home to fight his way back to health again, the father describes his son's liberal provision from his Christmas money for the necessities of twenty poor families, delivering the baskets to their homes himself; and, going on with the fond and beautiful recollections, he says:

“He commenced early in life to set himself against the crowd, for no man rises to real prestige who follows it. Of his own initiative he joined the church. For a long time he taught a Bible class of boys at Bethesda mission. He did not smoke, or swear, nor drink. He was absolutely clean. Yet in his stern opposition to the drift, he mingled tolerance in just that quality which contributed to real power to be used in opposition, and for that purpose alone. He organized systematically rescue squads for weaker boys at college who were wavering before strong but evil leadership. Against the boys who sought to lead astray the weaker he set his face like steel. Like every born leader he had his many warm friends, but if he ever had a bitter enemy I have yet to hear of him. His kindness, sincerity and good humour disarmed hatred. I never saw him angry. In twenty-one years he never gave me just cause for serious reproach.

“My boy lived long enough to ‘win out.’ Whatever the years would have added would be only material. In a man's character is his real career.

“He died suddenly in the midst of happiness. He died with his high ideals unlowered. He died with all the noble illusions of a high minded youth undisturbed and undisputed. He died without having lost ambition, with his eyes fixed upon the high

mountains of life, where beyond question, had he lived, he would have climbed."

Thus in these brief extracts from the tender and affectionate tribute of Charles G. Dawes to his son do we gain a glimpse of Christianity in action in the life of a high-minded youth of to-day.

## IV

### THE HOME FACTOR IN ADOLESCENT RELIGION

THE testimony of religious leaders is unanimous in giving a primary place to the home as the inspirer and builder of religious life. The relation of the home to religious ideals is indicated in recollections of the ancient days when the father was the recognized high priest of his own household. It is foreshadowed in the blessing pronounced by Jehovah upon the first human pair in Eden, and in Christ's first manifestation of His glory at a wedding feast. Even to-day Christ brings His first blessings to mankind in the circle of the family life.

In modern times so many foes prey upon the family that certain social prophets have arisen to tell us that the home as an institution is doomed. The increase of divorce, the tendency to late marriage, the many among the male portion of the race who because of choice or seeming financial compulsion remain single; the increased number of women whom a professional career, or the social usages of the times, have caused to walk the ways of single life,—all these conspire against the home. The unquestionable drift toward childlessness or a limited posterity—among those who do marry—

has eliminated the large families of our fathers and left fewer to share the eulogy and inherit the blessing of the ancient psalmist—"As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man, so are the children of youth; happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them."

But we cannot believe that the family is a passing institution of the social life, soon to die to make way for some superior plan of human living. A common dining hall and a system of civic child training cannot take the place of the family table and a mother's care. Such experiments—even though attempted under the name of religion—have been destructive to human individuality and disappointing in practical results. The home has held, and will hold, through the ages to come the respect and reverence of the thousands who recognize their moral indebtedness to its sacred influence. A chaplain of the World War says in his record of experiences at the Front:

"To speak of home to the soldier is to be assured of an immediate response. Over and over again I have seen the eyes of the soldiers in the hospitals brim over and their faces glow with smiles of delight and pride when I have spoken to them of parents, wife and children. Family photographs are erected into shrines of worship at the bedside of the wounded. . . . I have a feeling that the influence of the home upon the soldier has not been sufficiently stressed. It was his sheet anchor, and the powerful magnet which irresistibly drew him back to his native land. It would be safe to say that as an influence it affected the life and purpose of the average soldier more than the Church."



Important as the relation of men and women in the married life is to each other, the most delicate relation which the home sustains is its religious responsibility to the children of the family circle. As conceptions of moral duty increase, parenthood is found to be no lessening task. How to be a good parent is a tremendously greater job than how to be a good son or daughter.

We are familiar with the type of parent who assumed that the chief task in the raising of the child was the securing of obedience—no matter how it was secured. His chief dependence was the application of the rod—after the rule of Solomon. We are living in the generation of the sons and daughters of many such parents, who, though misguided, were as sincere in their belief as Mrs. Means of the Indiana backwoods, who said, “lickin’ and larnin’ go together.” But many modern and more thoughtful folks have been inclined to feel that neither Solomon nor those who followed to the full his suggestion have made a great success of their parental task. Too many of the present generation—like Rehoboam, the son of Israel’s famous king,—are even willing to rend a kingdom that they may gain some selfish end.

The clashes concerning life’s problems which often result in an insurrection against parental authority, are most frequent in the dawning of adolescence. The child is coming out into the self-determining spirit of manhood; the spirit of independence is developing, without which individuality is impossible and democracies cannot exist.

Unfortunately this spirit of independence outgrows the spirit of wisdom, and the purposes of life probably need more careful guidance than at any other period. The wise parent will not attempt however to use the same authoritative manner with the boy of fifteen which he used five years before, for even experience will teach him that there is a wide difference in the child of the pre-adolescent period and the one who has entered the years of youth.

It is in this period of peculiar restlessness and budding self-determination that the son or daughter is often thrown from the track of moral rectitude by an arbitrary spirit on the part of the parent. There is here the largest chance of the whole lifetime for alienations between age and youth from misunderstandings which will appear trivial to both parent and child in the light of after years. Mothers are usually quicker to sense this fact than fathers, hence the wandering prodigal tells an almost universal story of a father's sternness and the contrasting gentleness of a mother's love. Of the attitude of a mother to her son in this period, the mother of Phillips Brooks said:

“There is an age when it is not well to follow or question your boy too closely. Up to that time you may carefully instruct and direct him; you are his best friend; he is never happy until the story of the day has been told; you must hear about his friends, his school, all that interests him must be your interest. Suddenly these confidences cease; the affectionate son becomes reserved and silent, he seeks the intimate friendship of other lads; he goes out, he is

averse to telling where he is going or how long he will be gone. He comes in and goes silently to his room. . . .

“The period of which I speak appears to me to be the one in which the boy dies and the man is born; his individuality rises up before him, and he is dazed and almost overwhelmed by his first consciousness of himself. I have always believed that it was then that the Creator was speaking with my sons, and that it was good for their souls to be left alone with Him, while I, their mother, stood trembling, praying and waiting, knowing that when the man was developed from the boy I should have my sons again, and there would be a deeper sympathy than ever between us.”

Whenever this parental care has not existed in somewhat of the degree indicated by this wise mother, it has often happened that a sense of estrangement has ensued and the child has been driven away from that close fellowship which is the ideal relation between parent and child. With such a rupture of affection the opportunity of the home for the religious nurture of the child is practically destroyed.

The disruption of home ties so liable to occur has sent many a boy into the world to wander as a prodigal. An instructive study of the runaway boy is furnished by the tabulation of the cases of one hundred and seventeen wandering boys issued by the Chicago Bureau of Charities. The lads ranged in years from ten to nineteen years—only eleven being below the age of fourteen. Sixty-three were runaways—thirty-one of whom came from good homes. But of the total number it was



discovered that half of them came from homes where one or the other of the parents were dead. These fragmentary homes—with their abnormal conditions—doubtless did much to produce that dissatisfaction which resulted in the boys yielding to the wandering disposition.

These sorrowful cases of the severing of home ties by distrust, disagreement, or death, are paralleled in their regretful condition by instances of spiritually disrupted families living under the same roof, but not of the same heart and soul. Such occurrences are not infrequent, and it is not always the wife and husband who are at variance, but frequently the spiritual discord is found between father and son or mother and daughter. And sometimes it is the parent who is as much or more to blame for a disruption of interests that prevents family religion from being operative. In a rather unique “parable” a recent writer sets forth this condition:

“A certain man had two sons: and the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the portion of thy time, and thy attention, and thy companionship, and thy counsel which falleth unto me.’ And he divided unto him his living, in that he paid the boy’s bills, and sent him to college, and tried to believe that he was doing his full duty.

“And not many days after, the father gathered all his interests and ambitions and aspirations and took his journey into a far country—a land of stocks and bonds and securities—and there he wasted his opportunity of being a chum to his own son. And when he had spent the very best of his life and had



gained money but failed to find satisfaction, there arose a mighty famine in his heart, and he began to be in want of sympathy and real companionship. And he went and joined himself to one of the clubs of that country; and they elected him chairman of the house committee, and he would fain have satisfied himself with the husks that other men did eat; and no man gave unto him any real friendship.

“But when he came to himself he said, ‘How many men of my acquaintance have boys whom they understand, . . . and seem perfectly happy in the comradeship of their sons, and I perish here with heart hunger! I will arise and go to my son, and will say unto him, ‘Son, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight: I am no more worthy to be called thy father: make me as one of thine acquaintances.’ And he arose and came to his son. But while he was yet afar off, his son saw him, and was moved with astonishment, and he drew back and was ill at ease. And the father said unto him, ‘Son, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight: I am no more worthy to be called thy father: forgive me now, and let me be your friend.’

“But the son said, ‘Not so; . . . it is too late. There was a time when I wanted to know things, and when I wanted companionship and counsel, but you were too busy. I got the information, and I got the companionship; but I got the wrong kind; and now, alas! there is nothing you can do for me. It is too late, too late, too late.’”

The mutual obligation of parents and children to make home a livable place,—the best spot on earth for character development,—will take cognizance of the fact that religion must be taught by the home atmosphere as well as by formal practices. We have heard a great deal from the

pulpit and the religious press regarding the need of the family altar, and many regrets are expressed because of the disappearance of the time-honoured custom of family prayer. We can sympathize with these expressions, but it were vain to think that the mere observance of a formal time of prayer at morning or evening can atone for a general religious carelessness throughout the day.

The young people of the home will be more quickly impressed with the suggestions of religion which are placed around about them than by the didactic teaching of a set religious program. The high importance of the spiritual,—as against the merely intellectual or grossly material,—in dealing with the youth, is thus expressed by Emerson:

“In my dealing with my child, my Latin and my Greek, my accomplishments and my money, stead me nothing, but as much soul as I have avails.”

“Nurture by atmosphere,” as it is called by Patterson DuBois, deserves more consideration in the thought of teachers and parents than it is commonly given. The suggestions of the religious life conveyed by pictures, music, and literature, are as potent forces for good as the spoken word of the teacher. The Christian home should be full of such silent suggestions concerning the good and true. Dr. G. Campbell Morgan, the noted English divine, says that when he was a young man, just married, his father said to him, “Let there be not a single room in your new home that does not contain something which shall suggest your devotion to your Lord,—some picture or book or silent

testimonial which shall say to every guest of your home, 'This house is consecrated to the Christ whom I serve.' " The spirit of such a home, where religion is a matter of daily living, is reflected in a simple poem of anonymous origin:

" If every home were an altar,  
Where holiest vows were paid,  
And life's best gifts in sacrament  
Of purest love were laid;

" If every home were an altar,  
Where harsh or angry thought  
Was cast aside for kindly one,  
And true forgiveness sought;

" If every home were an altar,  
Where hearts weighed down with care  
Could find sustaining strength and grace  
In sweet uplift of prayer—

" Then solved would be earth's problems,  
Banished sin's curse and blight;  
For God's own love would radiate  
From every altar light."

Although so much has been said concerning the religious spirit of the home we do not wish to depreciate the value of more formal religious teaching. The observance of some form of worship has a great moral and spiritual influence on all the inhabitants of the home. Its educational value is by no means to be considered lightly. A Sunday-school teacher congratulated a young man in her class on his acquaintance with the Scriptures. He said, " Probably I do not deserve much credit for

what I know about the Bible. It is not through my own study of the book, but because I have heard my father read it every day at family prayers that I have learned so much of it."

A pastor marked the religious indifference of a certain son and daughter of a couple who were old parishioners of his. For a good many years he had watched their course with concern and prayer, but was never able to get at the secret of their religious apathy until he visited for the last time the mother of these young people. She was then old and enfeebled and about to depart for the other world, where her husband had sometime before preceded her. The pastor expressed his deep concern for the grown children of the family, and the mother replied sadly, "I have always dated the change of the religious attitude of my children from the morning when their father announced at the breakfast table that thereafter there would be no more family worship in the home." It was the religious indifference of the parent that had resulted in the destruction of youthful religious faith.

Associated with the old-time family altar the custom of returning thanks at meals was an almost invariable practice of the religious home. It is probable that this has not been so generally abandoned as the more formal prayers with Scripture reading accompaniment. As a respectful and decent remembrance of the Divine care, and a suggestion that is calculated to set the table conversation on a high level it performs an important ethical service. But it will not do for the head of



the house to mumble a formal grace before meals and follow it with bitter remarks of criticism regarding the character of the food served, lest the young people of the home discover the wide divergence between a form of prayer and the practice of Christian virtues.

It would be interesting to know to what degree young people are participating in family worship at the present time. Some parents make participation easy by providing each child with a Bible that the lesson may be read verse about; others close the prayer of the morning with the Lord's Prayer in which all may join. Among primary and junior children the participation in audible prayer is not difficult to secure, but during the reticent age of youth the parent may discover an unwillingness to formulate a prayer, even in homes where it has been previously a frequent practice. It is well not to force such a performance, but give nature and grace time to work out the peculiar problem of adolescence, and wait for that developing of mature religious expression which is certain to come if proper education and environment are provided by the home and the Church.

Some organized effort has been made for the restoration of these customs of home religious life. The Family Altar League, with a headquarters at Chicago, solicits the signing of pledges and registers the names of parents who will enroll their homes as houses of prayer. Various church papers publish selected lists of Scripture readings appropriate for family worship, and a number of

choice books are prepared with both Scripture selections and forms of prayer for family use.

The family circle of prayer as well as the family table often affords a chance for the practical teaching of the social element which belongs to the full-orbed religious life. The presence of a guest at the family table,—the leading of family prayers by a visiting minister,—these are reminders of the association of the family with the greater family of God's people everywhere. The contribution of the guest to the religious and social life of our children is too beneficial an influence to be omitted from the home life. In these days when the delegates even to Christian conventions are welcomed "to our hearts and our hotels" as one facetious speaker jokingly said at a great convention, we are in danger of losing the spirit of Christian hospitality which meant so much to our fathers and to us their children. An aged lady,—a Presbyterian minister's wife—was asked how she succeeded in raising such a fine family of children, whose devotion to the Church was so manifestly a part of their lives. She said, "I count that one of the spiritual advantages which was not the least in their development was the character of the guests we have had in our homes through the years. The missionaries and ministers and Christian laymen who have tarried with us have by their conversations and suggestions left an influence which has much assisted in setting high ideals before our children."

The thought of inspiration must be central in

the child's religious teaching in the home. The guest which produces awe instead of affection is not the ideal guest so far as youth is concerned. Personally, I can never feel myself quite in sympathy with a motto sometimes seen in Christian homes: "Christ is the Unseen Guest of this Home," on which appear statements about the Master being present to hear every conversation, present at every meal, etc. To youth the idea of Christ as a police officer can never appeal. The text, "Thou God seest me," has often suggested to the child a man with an account book, writing down the misdeeds of naughty children.

It is an excellent testimony to the character of ministers' homes that so many have come from them who have done religious or social service of so much worth to the world. In the light of the facts that have been repeatedly presented the old idea that ministers' sons are morally below par, is an exploded notion. Of the first thirty-seven great men enrolled in the Hall of Fame in New York City seven are preacher's sons. Ministers' sons have held the office of president of the United States in the ratio of one out of every nine. An investigation made some years since of the names in "Who's Who in America," showed that of the more than sixteen thousand names that appear eight hundred and ninety-eight are descendants of preachers. Of these there are one hundred and eighty-eight clergymen, including twenty-three bishops; one hundred and eighty educators; seventy-nine lawyers; ninety-seven authors; eighty-



two editors and journalists; seventy-four physicians and surgeons; and multitudes of others divided in smaller numbers between a variety of distinguished professions.

That the sons and daughters of ministers have often followed them in effective ministerial and missionary work is well known. Recent statistics from the Methodist Church, South, show that one in every nine of their ministers was raised in a parsonage home. The Southern Presbyterians count one in every six of their ministerial force as the sons of clergymen.

A considerable number of thoughtful folks still believe that the intellectual and moral endowments of parents are transmitted to their children along with their physical characteristics. The instance of the intellectual heritage of the twelve children of Lyman Beecher, the long line of talented musicians which the Bach family reveals through eight generations, as well as a large amount of other data, show that parentage has a large control over the destiny of the child. I have interested myself for some years in tracing the religious history of the fathers and mothers of large families, and noting the connection of that history with the religious characteristics of the children. Quite frequently the older children are found to be faithful adherents of the Church, but as one comes down the line to the children of younger years indifference and religious apathy are manifest. On closer scrutiny I have found that the children born in a "religious era" of the family history had their



predilection to the things of religion. If the father and mother became more absorbed in the things of material life and thinking less of the spiritual, the children born to them had interests of the more material sort. Religious interest regained upon the part of the parents would again produce offspring with the social inheritance of faith.

Paul, the apostle, seems to have indicated this inheritance of a bent toward the things of the Spirit, when—in writing to the young Timothy—he reminded his friend of “the unfeigned faith that dwelt first in thy Grandmother Lois, and in thy Mother Eunice, and . . . in thee also.” The child born under such favourable auspices and developed in the life of religion in a Christian home has an inheritance which is normal and right, and the serious acceptance of such a program for the parent and his offspring on the part of the Christian world would produce a new generation. Dr. Edward Everett Hale, speaking of the religious struggles through which some have passed, says, “Any man has an advantage not to be estimated, who is born, as I was, into a family where the religion is simple and rational; who is trained in the theory of such a religion, so that he never knows for an hour what these religious or irreligious struggles are. I always knew God loved me, and I was always grateful to Him for the world He placed me in. I always liked to tell Him so, and was glad to receive His suggestions to me.”

## V

### THE RELIGIOUS PERVERSITIES OF YOUTH

A SUPERFICIAL observer of child life is often puzzled when face to face with the moral perversities of youth,—especially if the spiritually wayward be the descendants of good parents. A common way of accounting for such dispositions and sinful outcroppings used to be that they were but the natural result of human depravity. We still believe in the influences of heredity, but since the more scientific methods of child study have prevailed, we do not attempt to give the law of inheritance more to bear than its share, and in addition to the natural legacies with which the child is endowed we are finding to-day many other causes why these are born blind, or have had their spiritual blindness thrust upon them.

Although we do not to-day associate the thought of deficient moral inheritances with the sin of our parents in the manner of ancient theologians, we still recognize the fact that the disposition of the parent affects the life start of the child as truly in the moral and spiritual realm as well as in physical manifestations, or mental capabilities. It seems to be true that some children are born almost without moral inclinations, while others are filled with

spiritual wisdom from the earliest moments of their lives.

If in these hereditary tendencies there is a foreshadowing of the character of the youth, may we not see that some of the waywardness of young people is due to the "sour-grape" legacies which are theirs. Even the youthful folly of the "wanderlust" has been traced to ancestral inheritances, and sometimes to nearer progenitors, rather than to the nomadic tastes of prehistoric men. A man of peculiar literary ability, but with the character of a confirmed vagabond,—known as "Josiah Flynt,"—whose life story was published in the magazines a number of years ago, says concerning his wandering habits, "The call of *die ferne*, as the Germans call it, . . . was my trouble from almost babyhood. It was from my mother,—as I have learned from what she has told me in later years,—I probably got some of my wandering proclivities. There was a time in her life, I have heard her say, when the mere distant whistle of a railroad train would set her 'go' instincts tingling, and only a sense of duty and fine control of self held her back." Josiah Flint Willard, as his real name was, born of the best ancestry and highly endowed by nature in so many particulars, had the disposition of a hobo, and became a vagabond because of an inner impulsion of which he says, "The longing to go would come upon me without warning in the dead of the night, sometimes under varying disguises as the years went by." Thus he roamed through the world, and died while still a

young man—suddenly stricken in a Chicago hotel. His farewell words to the physician who came to minister to him in his last moments were, “I have been a wanderer on earth, and in eternity my soul will wander on.”

Not alone by an unfavourable inheritance has the youth been deprived of his opportunity of moral excellence. As education and training have unquestioned power to change or overcome inherited faults of disposition, and build the individual into a symmetrical being, so they may also distort or wreck a human personality. Even an educational program which has in view the highest good of the individual may—through misapplication, or overzealous application,—defeat the object sought. Who does not know some mature individual—perhaps a number of them—whose moral and religious indifference or antipathy to Christianity can be traced to this very cause? Though there are many excellent things to be said concerning the strict moral regimen which was common in religious homes in this country’s beginnings, it must be said that it often brought a revulsion of feelings which resulted in turning the child from the things of religion or else from the commonly accepted orthodox standards. The Rev. John Murray, founder of American Universalism, gives us a picture of his father’s strict observance of the Sabbath day in his early home, which he prefaces by saying that his father “made the Sabbath a day much to be dreaded in our family.” The program of the day is then given, as follows:



"We were all awakened at early morn, private devotions attended, breakfast hastily dismissed, shutters closed, no light but from the back part of the house; no noise could bring any part of the family to the window; not a syllable was uttered upon secular affairs; every one who could read, children and domestics, had their allotted chapters. Family prayers succeeded, after which 'Baxter's Saint's Everlasting Rest,' was assigned to me, my mother all the time in terror lest the children should be an interruption. At last the bell summoned us to church, whither in solemn order we proceeded, I close to my father, who admonished me to look straight forward and not let my eyes wander after vanities. At church I was fixed at his elbow, compelled to kneel when he kneeled, to stand when he stood, to find the psalm, epistle, gospel, and collects for the day, and every instance of inattention was vigilantly marked and unrelentingly punished. When I returned from the church I was ordered to my closet, and when I came forth the chapter from which the preacher had taken his text was read, and I was questioned respecting the sermon, a part of which I could generally repeat. Dinner, as breakfast, was taken in silent haste, after which we were not suffered to walk, even in the garden, but every one must either read or hear reading until the bell gave the signal for the afternoon service, from which we returned to private devotion, to reading, to catechising, to examination, and a long family prayer, which closed the most laborious day of the week."

The distaste for religion that often attacks the adolescent is sometimes traceable to an unnatural and extreme standard which his elders seek to force upon him. Swinging to the opposite extreme the youth plunges into excesses of religious rebellion

which are appalling to parents and teachers. A minister's daughter, who had been most carefully raised, told me that when she was a young girl she would "leave the house," and, going behind the barn, "say all the bad words and unladylike things" she could think of,—as an outlet to the moral tension under which she was so constantly kept.

When such manifestations of religious insubordination are upon the youth his elders often become intensely pessimistic regarding the moral outlook, not only of the individual, but of the coming generation as a whole. For many years it has been common to hear certain anxious souls declare that "young people are not the same now as they were when I was young." But the truth is that the facts do not always bear out the implication that the youth of years ago were ideal in their behaviour. Some one has preserved for us an extract from the diary of Louisa Gurney, a young Quakeress who wrote the record about one hundred and thirty-five years ago. The mischievous girl says: "I was in a very playing mood to-day and thoroughly enjoyed being foolish, and tried to be as rude to everybody as I could. We went on the highroad for the purpose of being rude to the folks that passed. I do think that being rude is most pleasant sometimes."

The Church as well as the home has in certain instances been too severe when the youth has failed to measure up to an exact standard. In the effort to suppress dangerous deviations from moral

behaviour or theological beliefs it has sometimes erred to the spiritual detriment of a young life. The sister of Charles Bradlaugh tells an interesting story of her brother's departure from the Church and Christian faith. Young Bradlaugh had his early education in the Church of England, and was making such progress in religious matters that at the age of fourteen he was a teacher in the Sunday school. The pastor of the church selected some of the most promising boys of the congregation for a confirmation class and among them was Charles Bradlaugh. As a preparation for his reception into the Church he was given the thirty-nine articles of the Church to study. The youth made a careful comparison of them with the Gospels, and believing that they did not agree with the Scriptures he wrote the pastor—Mr. Packer—asking for information on the points in question. The pastor, considering that such questionings were heresy and unbelief, suspended the boy from his class for three months and wrote a letter to Charles's father denouncing his son's inquiries as atheistical in character. He further caused the father to place upon the wall of the boy's room the motto, "The fool hath said in his heart there is no God," as a constant reproof to his questioning of the creed of the Church. The enthusiastic rector further persuaded his employer to dismiss him from his place of labour unless he would promise to give up his heretical notions. Thus, at the age of sixteen Bradlaugh was dismissed and faced the world penniless, while his only associates in religious



study were a band of "freethinkers" in Bonner's Fields. Through the ignorance of a supposed servant of the Master there was lost to the Church one who might have been a strong exponent of spiritual truth, while anti-Christian forces gained a brilliant advocate. And it was all because the doubts and questionings of an adolescent boy did not meet with some explanation and answer from those who should have given him religious nurture and counsel.

The tendency to doubt and skepticism which is a usual accompaniment of the adolescent period is no doubt fostered in some degree by the scientific studies taken up during this age. In the junior years certain Bible stories have been accepted without question,—with little consideration whether the statements were to be taken literally or not. But as the older years come, the youth will ask himself the question, "Are these things to be taken as historical truth?" The creation account of the book of Genesis and the statements of his school text-books will come up for comparison and the unquestioning faith of childhood will not fit his need at this time. Statements of the Old Testament which assert that God commanded His people to slaughter every living creature—even innocent children and defenseless women—in their conquest of the land of Canaan, will stand side by side in his thought with the reported commands of the Kaiser to his soldiers in their invasion of Belgium. Little wonder if the youth shall seriously question his former ideas of Scripture interpretation.



It will not do for the religious teacher to dodge or equivocate when faced with such mental and spiritual problems. They are infinitely more vital to youth than they will appear in the after years of manhood, and they must be treated seriously. I cannot think that the successful leader of the young will ever deal with the thought of this conflict between the scientific spirit and certain ancient theories of Biblical inspiration with either intolerance or flippancy. The teacher must emphasize the thought of the value of the *spiritual truth* in the Bible stories, and show that the truth was presented through human channels, and men with these human limitations expressed truth only in accord with the thought and ideas of their own times. The Bible must be considered not as an authority upon scientific subjects, but as a revelation of God to men. If the Biblical writers had been miraculously guided so as to have correctly stated the yet undiscovered facts of astronomy, geology, and biology, such exactness would have made their messages ill-adapted to the people for whom they were written, and no more valuable to us to-day as a spiritual message. The youth must be shown that the inspiration of the Bible pertains to its religious message,—its presentation of God and His dealings with men. Even here the teacher must make plain that the Old Testament must be considered in the light of the New Testament age, and ideas of God which do not accord with the spirit of Christ, in whom “dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily,” must be con-

sidered as human, and thus imperfect, presentations of the Divine One. Neither the teacher of the young nor the youth himself has any need to be afraid of the truth—which, no matter where it is found, has the stamp of the Divine upon it. Neither should we fear for our modern Thomas, who—though misnamed a skeptic—when given a clear revelation of Him who is the embodiment of truth will joyfully acclaim Him,—“ My Lord and my God ! ”

The spirit of doubt and questioning which accompanies the adolescent years often associates itself with the relations of young people with their parents. An unwillingness to listen to advice, and even a distrust of their superiors, is as prominently displayed as infidelity in matters of religion. An incident comes to mind of a young girl whom I once knew who was pursued by the thought that she was an adopted child. Of the five children in the family she was the only one with light hair, though otherwise in face and form resembling her mother. Obsessed in some strange way that she was not one of the family she charged her parents with having adopted her when she was a babe. Her oldest brother, with the desire to tease her, assented to her belief,—saying that he remembered perfectly well when she was brought as a little babe to the home! The protestations of the parents, and their sorrow over the strange hallucination, could only with the utmost difficulty persuade their unhappy and mistaken child that she was their own daughter.

This incident is not so pathetic as that alienation of the child from its Heavenly Father which may take place by an indiscreet method of meeting the perversities of this period of youth. Because of an exceedingly painful experience on the part of the writer, when his own path of religious belief and service separated from that of his father, he has a keen appreciation of the heart throes which both the parent and child may suffer at such times. Such unhappy separations are often caused by the effort on the part of the parent to predetermine the details of a Christian life for the child. Many adults are pleased with the religious precocity of children and are surprised when in after years the child casts off this predetermined faith and asserts the right to think for himself. A peculiarly interesting story of such a religious experience is that which is told by Edward Gosse, in "Father and Son, a Study of Two Temperaments." He tells of his careful training under the watchful eyes of his father and mother, by whom he had been dedicated in infancy to Christian service. His father was a very zealous minister of a peculiar religious sect, who, having carefully instructed the boy, secured his baptism and admittance "as an adult" into the company of the brethren at the early age of ten years. After a somewhat pharisaical religious life during childhood's years, the boy came into youth's fuller estate;—his mother having died in the meantime, leaving him as a sacred charge to the father to bring up in the ways of the faith. The son's departure from home and



the years of school followed. The faith of his childhood was found too small a craft in which to sail manhood's larger ocean, and changes of manner and lessened fervency of religious expression brought sorrow to the old man's heart. Letters of inquiry and questions probing the inner life of his favourite son followed, and the breach finally came after a visit to the home and a face to face interview. The son then received a letter from the father expressing his disappointment and sorrow,—to which the boy replied in as tender a vein as possible and confessed in full his changed religious faith. The event was a sorrowful one to the son, and the father was stricken as with a fatal blow. The son's departure from the faith of his father is thus characterized in the closing words of this interesting study: "A case of Everything or Nothing; and thus deliberately challenged, the young man's conscience threw off once for all the yoke of his 'dedication,' and as respectfully as he could, without pride or remonstrance, he took a human being's privilege to fashion his inner life for himself."

The spiritual tragedy revealed in this life story was a result of the mistaken attempt of a father to secure a mature type of religious experience in his son, and the natural rebellion of a youth in the critically frank years of adolescence which swung him to the far extreme—perhaps to a complete departure from the Christian faith. The overzealous parent was not willing to allow his child the privilege which St. Paul accorded to



childhood, "when I was a child I thought as a child."

The writer confesses here to a mistake in his early dealing with children, in that he too often put a high value on the demonstrative conversion and religious manifestations of the precociously religious child. A deeper understanding of the nature of the child has led him to conclude that the child who is precocious in religious life is abnormal, and that such forced maturity is not a safe type of Christian life. In spiritual life as well as in nature we must have "first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear."

An instance of the reaction from an overstressed religious exercise in childhood was presented while assisting in revival work in an Iowa town some years ago. I was entertained in the home of the pastor, an elderly gentleman of the highest type of piety who manifested much concern over the spiritual condition of his son, a young man of dissipated habits. The parents told me how in childhood he had been a most exemplary Christian, having had a very bright conversion. When but twelve years of age he led the young people's meeting, astonishing them all by his clear expression of religious thought. His address was published in the city paper. But now all was different, and he was far away from Christ and the Church. A little study of home conditions cast a side light on the story at this time. The minister's little girl in very gladness had run down the walk to meet her mother who was coming home from the city. As

she skipped along with a happy laugh, the mother sternly reproved her for her demonstrations, saying, "Be quiet now, and act like a lady!" It was the same old story—the attempt to put an old head and a mature heart life into the child and the youth.

Through the efforts of the evangelist—my co-worker—the message of a personal religious life was brought home to the wandering son, and one night Fred came and very quietly gave his heart and life again to the Christ. It was not the same as in the days of boyhood, but it meant a facing again toward the better things of life. But how much better it would have been if his might have been a normal religious life, without the intervening years of sin! The superiority of this normal type of religious life is impressed upon us by an incident relating the conversation between two Christian men. One, a man of mature years, had just been telling to a younger man the startling experience through which he had passed,—his wonderful conversion to Christ after years of misspent life. His young friend said, when the story was finished, "That is the most wonderful story I have ever heard!" "Yes," said the narrator, "it is wonderful; and I can only think of one thing that would have been more wonderful,—that is, that I might have lived so that it would never have had to take place."

The perversities of youth which have led so many into doubt and sin are better understood in the light of the natural struggles which attend the

dawning of the independence which belongs to manhood. The human will, which in childhood has been a pliable and easily managed thing, becomes difficult to subordinate when youth begins to assert his personality. His will cannot be broken, but it can be trained and educated. For our basis in training and teaching, the scope of Biblical material was never greater than now, and the opportunity for the rescue of the modern youth from the uncertainties of doubt and skepticism was never greater than in the present time. The combined testimony of educators and churchmen of the present day, the voices of the sages of old, and the tender love of our revered fathers and mothers,—all echo the heart's longing for the truth which a modern hymnist has presented as a panacea for the errors of men:

“ Teach us the truth in the Bible,  
Spirit of wisdom and light;  
Open Thy word to Thy children,  
Father of mercy and might.

“ Open life's vision before us;  
Show us the way we should take;  
Grant that the light of Thy counsel  
Over our spirits may break.

“ Bring to us help from the Bible,  
Strength in our doubts and our fears;  
Comfort when sorrows o'erwhelm us,  
Hope when eternity nears.

“ Show us the Christ of the Bible,  
Lover and helper of men,  
Speaking His words to His loved ones,  
Over and over again.”

## VI

### THE PUBLIC SCHOOL AND THE RELIGIOUS LIFE

A BRIGHT boy among the third grade children in a certain Sunday school said one Sunday morning to his teacher, "You have to go to the Catholic school if you want to learn about Jesus." When his statements were questioned, he insisted, "Yes, you do. In the Catholic school every day they have church and learn about Jesus. I know some kids who go over there, and I wish I could hear about Jesus every day, too. I go to this school," pointing to the public school standing near the church, "and we never learn anything about Jesus there. Why don't they tell us about Jesus in our school?"

The criticism of this youngster regarding his school is in line with that wider expression of dissatisfaction concerning the secular character of our public schools which is frequently heard. In the effort to avoid sectarian instruction and to be true to the American principle of the separation of Church and state, the public schools have eliminated religion itself and excluded definite moral ideals. Roman Catholic and Jewish prejudice, as well as the influence of smaller religious parties, together with atheistic opposition,—all these forces



have combined to hinder the reading of the Bible or the inculcation of religious truths in the public school, so that our school system is sometimes characterized as completely godless.

We cannot believe that such a condition is in accordance with the best thought of educators of any note, nor in harmony with the spirit of true Americanism. The public school does not have to be so colourless regarding the principles of religion and morality as to have a weakened moral influence, and the teacher need not be a veritable pagan in his character or his teaching. The safety and security of all social institutions demands that the young life of the nation shall have instruction in the fundamentals of religion and ethics as well as the knowledge of the common branches of the school curriculum.

The statesmanship of the country has not been insensible to the relation that religion sustains to education, as many of the utterances of our national leaders indicate. In its early legislation providing for the government of the Northwest Territory, in 1787, Congress adopted an Act, the preamble of which reads: "Religion, morality and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and means of education shall be forever encouraged." The principle thus enunciated by our fathers has given the subject of public education an association with the things of religion and moral life in the minds of the best citizens of this country that is growing stronger than ever in recent years.

Educators and men of literary genius have not hesitated to declare the relation of religion and education. Ruskin said: "Education does not mean teaching people what they do not know. It means teaching them to behave as they do not behave. It is not teaching the youth the shapes of letters and the tricks of numbers and then leaving them to turn their arithmetic to roguery and their literature to lust. It is, on the contrary, training them into the perfect exercise and kingly continence of their bodies and souls." It was William James who said: "Education cannot be better described than by calling it the organization of acquired habits of conduct and tendencies to behaviour." The trend of such utterances,—many more of which might be given,—is all toward the thought that educational processes have to do with the deep springs of human behaviour, and that the educated person is not one simply stuffed with the knowledge of text-books, but rather one who is a student in the art of correct living.

The attitude of our best educators is summed up in a resolution passed by the National Educational Association (1905) which asserts that "the ultimate object of popular education is to teach children to live righteously, healthily and happily, and that to accomplish this object it is essential that every school inculcate the love of truth, justice, purity and beauty, through the study of biography, history, ethics, natural history, music, drawing, and the manual arts. . . . The building of character is the real aim of the schools, and the ultimate

reason for the expenditure of millions for their maintenance." The purpose partly outlined here found expression in somewhat clearer form when in 1915 the Association offered a prize of one thousand dollars for the best treatise on the subject of the place of religion in education which would provide a plan for introducing religion into the public schools. The general interest in the subject is shown by the fact that nearly fourteen hundred competitors entered for the contest, representing every state in the Union but one. The number of manuscripts submitted was four hundred and thirty-two. Five of these essays were published,—the winning one and four others of excellent worth. The plans were of a general character and aimed to furnish a basis for moral and religious training which might be acceptable alike to Protestant, Roman Catholic and Jew.

Several years before this contest, Prof. Vernon P. Squires, of the University of North Dakota, presented to the Association a suggested course of Bible study for use in the high schools. This course, as an elective, has found a place in the public schools of North Dakota, and has been widely referred to as the "North Dakota plan." Generally speaking, the study of the Bible required in this course, which occupies two years, with weekly recitations, is taken at the churches in connection with the Sunday-school sessions. The text-book is the Bible, with the choice of the version employed left to the individual pupil. The plan was first put in operation in 1913. During the



first four years of its operation six hundred and seventy-nine papers were sent up to the State Board of Education—which sent out the examination questions—and of these a total of six hundred and four received a passing grade, and these pupils were allowed a half unit of credit on their high school work. The papers submitted represented seventy-nine different towns. The plan seems to be successful, and State Superintendent E. J. Taylor said (1916), “The plan has met with marked success. People of the various denominations are friendly toward the plan, and a number of students belonging to all the leading denominations take the examination and receive credit.”

As a result of a Bible study plan for college credit, adopted by the Teachers' College of Greeley, Colorado, a state plan for high school Bible study, coöperating between the Church and the public school in that state, was worked out and put into operation in 1914. The Colorado plan provides for a four years' course of study. More than six hundred students were enrolled in these classes during the first year, and one city—Fort Morgan—had fifty per cent of its high school students in Bible study. As in North Dakota the work is conducted outside of the school hours, under competent teachers, and usually during the Sunday-school period. Statements from educators who are associated with this work show an increasing number of students in these Bible classes, and indicate that the plan is constantly growing in favour.

The efforts for the correlation of the school and



the Church in systematic Bible study have reached out to other states so that in more or less degree similar plans are in operation in nearly a score of states in the Union. The new constitution of the state of Illinois contains a paragraph which says that the reading of the Bible in the public schools of the state shall never be forbidden. These encouraging indications of the friendly attitude of educators and legislators are, we trust, but foregleams of that larger opportunity for Bible knowledge which the public schools of the future will afford to those whose training in this particular is now of the most fragmentary and unsatisfactory sort.

The high quality of the literature of the Bible, as well as the lessons of ethical value, demand that the program of education shall not disregard its importance as a part of human culture. Dr. Lyman Abbott, speaking to a great church gathering, and contending for the use of the Bible in our public schools, said, "I hope that my children, or at least, my grandchildren, will live to see the ecclesiastical prejudices on the one side and the skeptical prejudices on the other give way, and the Bible,—the most inspiring book of all literature, ancient or modern,—taught in our public schools as the life, literature, and laws of a great people to whom and through whom has come the great moral and spiritual message of the world's redemption."

It must not be concluded because of the absence of the Bible from our curriculum of public school study that our schools are doing nothing in the

formation of moral character. Where the character of the teachers and the personnel of the school boards are favourable to religion, the schools are having a decidedly moral and religious atmosphere. With a better understanding of the opportunities of the teacher for the introduction of the ethical element into his instruction the public school teacher can certainly increase his effectiveness in this particular. There are lines of study now being pursued in the regular high school course which are capable of inculcating the highest moral and religious lessons without any sectarian bias. Stories may be told and illustrations from daily life given which contain effective suggestions to the mind of youth, that will be better received than any didactic moral instruction. A great educational leader said, "Show me a man who can teach astronomy, geology, biology or history without teaching religion, and I will show you a man who can paint the pictures of George Inness without being an artist, or one who can write the verses of Browning without being a poet." Speaking of an old teacher of science he said, "To hear him speak in inspired and trembling tones of the wonders of the human body or of the sidereal universe, without a thrill of wonder, love and praise, was as impossible as for a musician to hear the playing of Ole Bull without some trembling of the heart."

In the study of history and biography the teacher will have an excellent chance to magnify the high characteristics of loyalty and self-sacrifice, as well as enforce the truth of a Destiny that

shapes even the ends of national life. The struggles for the abolishing of slavery in this country, and the present efforts for the securing of a "dry" nation, and eventually a temperate and sober world, are fraught with chances to inspire the heroic instincts that come only to full growth through religion.

Youth loves the heroic. With the present effort of the world to get away from the obsession of militarism, it will be the work of the public schools to show the rising generation that there is a militant opportunity for them in the battle against the evils of society. Years ago a young man sat in the study of Wendell Phillips, who in answer to his queries told the story of the struggle against human slavery which had come to an end through the efforts of the brawn and brain of a war-torn nation. The young man's eyes glowed, and in his enthusiasm he cried, "Oh, Mr. Phillips, I wish I could have lived in your time!" The polished orator, rising quickly from his chair, flung open the door of the room and pointing to the lights that glimmered out through the darkness of the night, said, "Do you see those shining lights? They are lighting up the saloons and the hell holes of this city. There is your work, young man. You are indeed living in my time, and you are living in God's time."

The teacher who can rightly interpret the teachings of science, and biography and history to his pupils has invested the language of the text-book with a new meaning and aroused aspirations to-

ward the highest life in his pupils, which will make the voices of the past call insistently for a devotion of his life to a righteous cause. In the schoolroom he will make his moral choices not from expediency, but in accord with the spirit which rings in the lines of the poet:

“ Speak, History! who are life’s victors?  
Unroll thy long annals and say,—  
Are they those whom the world calls victors,  
Who won the success of a day?  
The martyrs or Nero? The Spartans  
Who fell at Thermopylæ’s tryst,  
Or the Persians or Xerxes?  
His judges or Socrates?  
Pilate or Christ? ”

It must be admitted that many of our public schools are not administered with such high ideals in view. Too many instructors have lacked either the courage or the conscience to take their great opportunity of character formation seriously. On the part of the pupil there has often been the lack of an appreciation of the moral chance of his high school years. In this period so peculiar he understands little about himself and the teacher often understands less. What the real moral effect of the public school is upon the life of the pupil can better be judged by some of the confessions from the pages of personal experience.

With the desire to know something of the forces that operate in the life of the youth, I prepared a questionnaire and sent it out to the ministers of a large Methodist conference. Among the inquiries



concerning the influence of their home training and school life, one question—"What effect did your life in the public school have upon your religious life?"—brings some interesting replies. A tabulation of one hundred and seventy-five reports gives the following result: Influence good, thirty-two; influence bad, twenty-eight; no effect either way, eighty-eight; no reply, twenty-seven. In the cases where the results were good, several said that they were influenced for good by the life of certain teachers; one saying, "two teachers especially helped me," another, "a Christian teacher left a decided influence on my life for good," still another, "an encouraging effect on account of the religious life of the teachers." Other statements regarding the good effects were—"gave me a new vision of life, and fitted me to a certain extent for the work in which I am now engaged," "on the whole stimulated my religious life," "part of the time it was conducive to my religious life, and part of the time otherwise." Those who noted a bad influence coming out of their public school life speak as follows: "The temptations and associations made it hard to be a Christian," "very detrimental," "non-religious as far as I can remember," "always more or less of a depressing agent," "took away every religious impression," "very little that was helpful."

The large number who found that the religious effect of the public school was neutral, and the fact that those who believed the influence bad is nearly as large as those who are positive concern-

ing the good effect, would indicate that the public school in the life of many of these boys was not a very vital religious help. The questionnaire is not comprehensive enough to base broad conclusions upon, but it may be assumed that the men who answered the questions represent quite fairly the type among the middle class of our people. The larger number of them were from Christian homes, and but few from homes positively irreligious. If the idea of the supposed badness of ministers' sons were to be accepted as the general reason for the failure of the boys to get moral and religious help from their school life, it will have to be taken into account that only twenty-six of these preachers were sons of the parsonage, while the remainder were from the homes of the ordinary American citizen.

This little view from the recollections of some serious and well-balanced individuals, as well as some personal memories concerning the public school years, leads me to conclude that the school is the moral battle ground of the youth. It is his world, so to speak, in which he must learn through study, play, and discipline, the responsibilities of living—not only that interior life of the soul which he lives with himself,—but the kind of behaviour he shall exhibit toward his fellows.

In considering the moral influence of the public school we must remember that it is the agency most responsible for the character ideals of the rising generation,—next to the home life. The Church can scarcely expect to compete with the school as

an influence upon the moral life of youth if the tendency of the school is antagonistic or even neutral in regard to religion and morals. In the thought of the average youth the school occupies a larger place than does the Church. The pupil who must attend a school where the ethical side of his nature is given no cultivation deserves the sympathy of society, and,—if he falls into crime,—the leniency of the courts of justice.

The influences of the school life begin early in the life of the child, and the whole school curriculum must be considered when attempting to introduce moral and religious training. Educators have discovered that the moral life of the preadolescent boy must have consideration if they are to have success in establishing him in good character in his years of youth. It is in the grades where the moral foundations are laid which give a certain bent to high school years. Prof. C. E. Joiner, an Illinois superintendent of schools, made a tabulation, a few years since, of troublesome boys—"pre-delinquents" as they are designated. Complete statistics were received from schools in nine Illinois cities, and boys from the third to the eighth grades were included in the investigation. The total number considered was 2,452, and of these three hundred and twenty-two were liable to become delinquents later on. Nearly one hundred and fifty of these were from bad homes, nearly one hundred were from homes where divorce or death had given them fractional parental care, one hundred and sixty-seven were never in Sunday



school, one hundred and three were from homes where there was no religious influence.

It may be further noted that of these three hundred and twenty-two pre-delinquents, one hundred and eighty-eight were older in age than those in their class, through irregular attendance or failing to pass in their studies. Quite likely many of these dropped out before the high school years. Indeed this is usually the case with the delinquent youth,—from one cause or another he leaves school in the latter part of his grade school career, or during the first year of high school. A study of the school records of two hundred and sixty-two delinquent boys who were before the Chicago Juvenile courts showed that only three of them ever reached the high school, while twenty-nine others got only as far as the eighth grade. Forty-five per cent did not get beyond the fifth grade, and twenty-five per cent were below the fifth grade. In the light of these figures the problem of the moral training which should be afforded by the public school will not be considered simply as a high school need.

It cannot be questioned that the public schools have before them a greater moral and religious opportunity—in many communities, at least—than the church school. Indeed, considering the question in a nation-wide sense, with a public school enrollment of 22,000,000 there are more young people under the influence of the public schools than the Sunday schools can boast of reaching with their teaching. Recent figures show the number of young people and children under the age of



twenty-five years in church schools—Protestant, Catholic and Jewish,—to be 16,318,900. Comparing these figures with the total population of young people under the age of twenty-five, it is shown that fully sixty-nine and three-tenths per cent are receiving no systematic instruction in morals and religion. Multitudes of these youth who have no access to, or desire for, the church and Sunday-school influences are in our public schools. With proper thought and planning upon the part of educational leaders much may be done for the moral and religious development of these. The situation is such that it amounts to a spiritual tragedy, if not in the end to national decline and death, if the school system makes no attempt to measure up to its tremendous moral responsibility.

To secure the moral atmosphere that will be morally invigorating in our public schools will require that the nation invest more than money in its schools. The proposed introduction of a secretary of education in the President's Cabinet to sit side by side with the men who look after our money and care for the health of our hogs, is a movement in the right direction. But the efforts that will count for immediate results of the right character will be the high moral demands of Christian communities who shall make it impossible for men of low ideals or women of frivolous character to attempt to teach our youth; the payment of salaries that shall sustain the teacher in a comfortable manner; and the honour to his calling which shall assure him of public respect;—these will all contribute to the

establishment of the moral ideals of which we may be proud.

The character of the teacher is, after all, the keynote of the school. Once, when in college, I remember having heard an address by an English lecturer who came to tell us of his beloved teacher—whose name is a fragrant memory on both sides of the sea—Thomas Arnold, of Rugby. The memory of his story of Arnold's character and the Rugby school associates itself with Thomas Hughes' description of a boy's first day in chapel at Rugby, listening to the Doctor's preaching:

“We couldn't enter into half that we heard; we hadn't the knowledge of our own hearts or the knowledge of one another, and little enough of the faith and hope and love needed to that end. But we listened, as all boys in their better moods will listen (aye, and men too, for the matter of that), to a man whom we felt to be, with all his heart and soul, and strength, striving against whatever was mean, and unmanly and unrighteous in our little world. It was not the cold clear voice of one giving advice and warning from serene heights to those who were struggling and sinning below, but the warm living voice of one who was fighting for us and by our sides, and calling on us to help him and ourselves and one another. And so, wearily and little by little, but surely and steadily on the whole, was brought home to the young boy, for the first time, the meaning of his life,—that it was no fool's or sluggard's paradise into which he wandered by chance, but a battle-field ordained from of old, where there are no spectators, but the youngest must take his side, and the stakes are life and death.”

## VII

### THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE CHURCH SCHOOL

**O**F all the institutions of the Church probably none has been more changed and enlarged in conception and purpose since its humble beginning than the church school. The school organized by Robert Raikes, which has generally been considered the genesis of the Sunday-school movement, was in a large degree social and reformatory in character. It was primarily intended as a civilizing influence for the street gamin, and adapted only to the neglected boys of the slums. The organization had no ecclesiastical standing, and for many years fought out a precarious existence both in England and America before the Church approved and recognized it as an adjunct of its work.

Early conceptions of the Sunday school gave it a subordinate place in the Church's program, somewhat dubiously acknowledging its value in religious training. In 1785—only five years after Raikes' first school was established,—John Wesley wrote, "Who knows but what some of these schools may become nurseries for Christians?" The nursery conception of the Sunday school lingered with the Church for many years, and the first Sunday

schools were doubtless composed exclusively of those of tender years.

The institution has long been known by the name "Sunday school," but some have insisted on the name "Sabbath school" or "Bible school." Among a large number of experts in religious education the name "church school" has more recently won recognition as an acceptable and appropriate title. There is a wide-spread conviction that this organization is just now entering in upon a new era of usefulness as the most important factor in the religious life of the youth of our land. The foundation for this new and enlarged work of the church school has been laid by the patient endeavour of those who have carried on the work of the Sunday school through the century and more of its existence. We mean no depreciation of this time-honoured institution of the Church when we prophesy the larger mission of the church school.

A consideration of the difficulties which have hitherto hindered the school of the Church from meeting youth's needs in the highest degree will doubtless be helpful in planning for the future program of greater effectiveness. We have not yet reached the place where we can say that the Church has corrected its deficiencies regarding its approach to youth. The thin place in our school enrollment is always found in the years from twelve to twenty-five,—the very period covered by our study. Every Christian worker knows that the holding of the intermediate boy and girl in the Sunday school



is a difficult task. The boys especially,—from many different causes,—drop out as the years of youth come on.

A situation somewhat analogous is humorously depicted by a Sunday-school worker. He had visited the home of a certain family in an outlying district where he found one child,—a little girl who was passionately fond of pets. She had a pet dog, a pet cat, and a pet calf. Talking on his favourite subject of the Sunday school he inspired the little girl with the thought, and after his departure she organized a Sunday school with the dog and the cat and the calf as pupils. Writing to her friend she told him of her new school. A few months later the gentleman was again passing through the neighbourhood and playfully asked how the Sunday school was getting along. The child replied, “Oh, it’s all broke up now; the calf got too big to go to Sunday school.”

For some years the church and Sunday-school worker has noted with far too much complacency the dropping out of the adolescent boy from his former place in the school; considering that he would probably be brought back some time; and if not—such religious degeneracy was his own fault anyway. The matter was often too lightly passed by as a joke—a mere episode of the “smart Aleck” age. So it has come to pass that practically every community has notable groups of young people who have become “too big to go to Sunday school.” The Church’s lack of ability to cope with the situation results in the loss of many boys and

girls from the Sunday schools in the most vital years of character formation. The elementary superintendent of a Sunday school in an eastern city said that during ten years more boys had been graduated from the primary department which she superintended than there were members of the school at the end of the ten year period. It is to be hoped that this is an exceptional case. A number of careful surveys have however revealed the depressing fact that the average Sunday school loses each year from one-half to two-thirds of its boys in the period which divides childhood from youth.

Not only does the Church have to answer for the failure to keep that which has been committed to its trust, but the unreached multitudes of the young arise to condemn us for our careless neglect. The statistics of the Inter-Church World Movement show that twenty-seven millions of nominally Protestant children and youth under twenty-five years of age are not enrolled in any Sunday school; while the total statistics concerning the spiritually neglected of our land show that two out of every three young people under the age of twenty-five years attend no religious school.

There is an added reason why the Sunday school has failed to reach the highest standard. It is to be found in that inadequate vision which men have possessed when they considered its program of work. It seems peculiar that many who are perfectly familiar with other teaching activities should be unwilling to think of the Sunday or church

school as a *school*. A high school principal, who was also a teacher in the Sunday school, as I spoke to her one day concerning the "school of the Church," said, "Why, I never have thought of the Sunday school as a school." A strange notion is sometimes possessed by very good people that religious truths are so supernatural in character that they are apprehended by faculties not earthly. The modern Christian worker realizes that if the church school is to be effective in teaching religious truth the same pedagogical laws must be observed as in teaching any other subject.

The narrow vision of the Church's opportunity in its schools of religion is indicated also by the very meagre financial investments the Church is willing to make for the religious education of the young. An investigation of the amounts expended for religious work by nineteen churches in a typical small city shows that only two cents of each dollar was spent for Sunday-school purposes. We are told that during 1919 twenty religious bodies in this country, representing thirteen millions of members, contributed only a per capita average of five and two-third cents each for their national boards of religious education. The expenditures for religious education stand out in startling contrast to the amount invested in the maintenance of our public schools. In the larger number of our Sunday schools the per capita expense of the materials for religious training are probably much less than one dollar; while the recent findings of a survey of the country show that the United States is spend-



ing an average of forty dollars per year for each city child's education, and twenty-four dollars for each rural child. This provision for popular education is of course inadequate, but by the side of it our investment in religious training appears trivial indeed.

This shortage of provision for religious instruction has doubtless been more vividly noted by the youth themselves than by us of the older generation. They have compared—in their thought, at least—Sunday-school education with the thoroughness of their study in the public school, as well as the qualifications of the teachers, and the equipment furnished for the work of the school. Very often the teacher of the Sunday-school class, though of unimpeachable moral character, has lost in their respect, because of lack of training for the work; the school itself has appeared but a farcical imitation of the real thing, and the youth has joined the vast number of those who have quitted the institution. Possibly it was such a youth who invented the cynical conundrum, "When is a school not a school?—When it is a Sunday school."

The inflexibility which the Sunday school has possessed has been a great detriment to its complete success. Certain preconceived plans and long-established customs have hindered any adaptation to a new and better program. We have too long burned incense to religious formalities,—seeking the letter rather than the spirit. The monotony and lack of systematic purpose has been a deadening thing to the versatile spirit of youth. I have



a vivid recollection of one superintendent who presided over a school in my youthful days. Being no singer himself, he seemed to think it a waste of time to have much singing in his school. With somewhat of a taste for music, I often sang at other times all the verses of four and five verse hymns without tiring. But the good old man always cut the two or three hymns we sang each Sunday in our school to only two verses, and the monotony of his announcement—"last verse"—has lingered with me through the years. A versatility is given to the public schools in the advantage of a new teacher and a new personality as the child proceeds from grade to grade; but the same child in the Sunday school often has the same teacher and the same class pew through many years. In one church where I had recently become pastor, a boy in the junior years said, "Say, can't I go in that other class? I've been in this class for seven years now."

The monotony of method with which the average Sunday school is afflicted is due largely to the wrong emphasis which may have been placed upon the essential element in the Sunday school. A Sunday-school expert recently declared to a group of workers that there are three essential things in the church school—the teacher, the book, and the pupil,—and followed the declaration with the question, "Which of these is most important?" The answers given showed great confusion upon this point. And yet upon our answer to this question determines in large degree the effectiveness of

the school. If it is placed upon the teacher it will mean that the class and the method of approach to the learner shall be subject to one individual. If it is placed upon the Book—valuable as we believe the Bible to be as the basis of all right thinking and living,—it will mean that he who knows the Bible need not concern himself with knowing the boy. It must be John for the Bible and not the Bible for John. If we place the emphasis upon the pupil, it will mean that the teacher shall make his preparation not from his own standpoint of need, and that the Bible shall not be considered as a general message to humanity, but that all truth—whether Biblical or otherwise—shall be focused upon the pupil's need. Perhaps it is not strange that the group of workers should finally have fixed their vote upon the pupil as the most important of the trio of elements in the modern Sunday school. With this thought in mind—influenced no doubt by the more thorough organization of the public school, and by the insistent demand of dissatisfied youth,—the modern church school has become a new creation, with methods based upon the sentiment, "The need of the pupil is the law of the school."

The outstanding features of the modern Sunday school affect both the teacher and the pupil, and the method of handling the Book. The material of instruction and the pupils are subject to an exact grading, and the teachers and leaders are trained for their specific work. Whatever objection may develop concerning the matter of grading or

teacher training will not be from the pupil,—but is more usually from the adult leaders in the old-time Sunday school. The young people are used to the idea of the graded instruction and systematic organization which belongs to a school. They take readily to hand-work, note-books, map drawing, written essays and discussions,—all these things are a part of real study. Unless disturbed by the unfavourable comments of their elders, the introduction of modern methods into the Sunday school will not seem an incongruity.

The lessons of the graded series have been especially chosen with the thought of making religious truth real to youth. An examination of the lesson material furnished for the pupils from twelve to twenty years of age will show that the lessons make possible a more natural and timely presentation of religious truth than old methods could ever give. Where there has been difficulty in the use of the new lesson material it has usually been because of the lack of sympathetic and consecrated teachers to take up the work. A very widely used graded course of lessons has planned its work to meet the needs of the different ages as follows: Beginning with pupils about the age of thirteen a series of lessons on “Leaders of Israel,” is taken up, while the last three months considers “Religious Leaders in North America.” The course on leaders is continued through the larger part of the next year, with “Early Christian Leaders,” and the last quarter is devoted to “Some Famous Friendships.” “The Life of



Christ" comes next, and presents Jesus entering in upon His work, follows the years of His popularity, and shows how He faced opposition and death, and rose again. The last three months of this year is filled with an inspiring missionary study—the Life of David Livingstone,—under the title, "A Modern Disciple of Jesus Christ." At the age of about sixteen there is a study of "Christian Living," and this is followed by lessons on the general subject of "The World as a Field for Christian Service." Historical studies founded on both Old and New Testaments form the basis of study in the next two years, while the last year of the course gives a study of "The Bible and Social Living," presenting Christian standards of family and community life, with practical studies on Christian ethics in Church and state and in the industrial order.

It will be noted upon a close examination that this graded course takes advantage of youth's appreciation of the hero. A criticism recently given by a very zealous—but somewhat misinformed—man, concerning the material of the graded lessons, was that it was impossible to contribute to the salvation of the child by "teaching about George Washington; the teacher should present Jesus Christ to his pupils." A more careful consideration of the matter ought to bring the good brother to see that in presenting to the youth the idea that God is still working in the lives of men and in the destinies of nations we are putting into their thought a very vital concept. What matters it to



the average youth that men three thousand years ago had the presence of God with them, if God is not present in the life of to-day? The natural admiration of the heroic which dwells in the soul of youth makes even the minor ethical details of a hero's life into mighty texts which tell of holy living.

The story of Mary Antin, a foreign immigrant girl, contains the following: "When, after the Christmas holidays, we began to study the life of Washington, . . . it seemed to me that all my reading and study had been idle until then. The reader, the arithmetic, the song book, that had so fascinated me until now, became suddenly sober exercise books, tools wherewith to hew a way to the source of inspiration. . . . When the classes read, and it came my turn, my voice shook and the book trembled in my hands. I could not pronounce the name of George Washington without a pause. Never had I prayed, never had I chanted the songs of David, never had I called upon the Most Holy, in such utter reverence and worship as I repeated the simple sentences of my child's story of the patriot. . . . Formerly I had fasted and prayed and made sacrifice on the day of Atonement, but it was more than half play, in mimicry of my elders. I had no real horror of sin, and I knew so many ways of escaping punishment. . . . As I read about the noble boy who would not tell a lie to save himself from punishment, I was for the first time repentant of my sins."

The appeal of youth's love of the heroic is

closely associated with the thought of Christian service, with which the Biblical material and the extra biographical studies are replete. The wisdom of our specialists in this field of education is noted also in the studies which show the Christian's relation to society and the state. When such courses are widely adopted we may expect sweeping changes in the character of the citizen and in the intelligence and spirituality of the Christian.

The one who has gained a vision of the mission of the church school will realize that the organization has to do with the whole life of its pupils. Religious education is no longer concerned with the matter of book knowledge alone, for the pupil has a body as well as a brain and a soul. Formerly the Sunday school was little interested in the bodily life of the pupil. In a questionnaire presented a few years ago at some conventions of a certain denominational young people's society I gathered from the delegates present answers to the question, "Does your church, young people's society, or Sunday school, interest themselves in athletics?" The replies indicated quite a general lack of interest in such endeavours on the part of these organizations. But changes have gradually come within only a few years. Athletic teams have been organized in many places and in an increasing number of churches the Sunday-school pupils are receiving some physical development where there would be none at all if the church did not furnish it.

Associated with the activities of a physical

nature the modern Sunday school is in many localities conducting a large part of the recreational activities of the community. The social touch has indeed been the stronghold of the Sunday school through many years of its existence. The adolescent especially goes to Sunday school because others of his set are there. A very interesting amount of data in answer to the question "Why do boys go to Sunday school?" has been gathered by Dr. R. A. Waite, for some time connected with the International work of the Boys' Department of the Young Men's Christian Association. The reasons given by these teen-age boys in a total of eight thousand cases range in precedence, as follows: (1) because of the crowd or gang spirit; (2) because of leader or teacher; (3) because of recreational life; (4) because of desire to "belong"—the organization spirit; (5) because of opportunity to render service for others. The reasons for leaving Sunday school were the absence of these elements.

The modern Sunday school is at present taking advantage of another neglected factor in its appeal to youth. It was formerly thought that the Sunday school was to build itself around the notion of *instruction*; but the school of the present day is beginning to emphasize the element of *worship* in a way that will make for splendid results. The "opening exercises" of the old-time Sunday school have given way to the more meaningful moments of worship in the various departments of the new church school. The singing of the hymns will

not be for the purpose of filling in time until some tardy teachers and dallying pupils arrive, but for suggesting the thought of the day and the lesson hour, for the uplift of heart that is necessary if we are to come into touch with the Divine. The participation in the opening service of prayer, and the personal prayer of the class room, is a religious necessity for the youth in the absence of the family altar and the depopulated condition of the church prayer meeting. It may be here said also that the adolescent boy or girl will better learn to pray among those of his own sex and age than in the mixed or promiscuous gathering. With mixed gatherings of young people meeting together in the young people's societies for a generation past we still have few young people that can lead in public prayer. May it not be that the Sunday-school class in its worship period can better teach the youth the art of prayer among his fellows than we have yet been able to do in the more public way? It was in the very intimate surroundings of the chosen few that the disciples said, "Lord, teach us to pray."

The outline of the activities and possibilities of the church school which this chapter furnishes is inadequate to show in detail the changes which have taken place in the Sunday school in the period of over one hundred and forty years since the organization first began. The present scope of the church school is only hinted, when in the words of a prominent Sunday-school worker we quote the statement: "Any completed program of



religious education must include the three factors of worship, instruction, and expression." The primary purpose of the church school is not different from the Sunday school of our fathers, for it must still be understood that the program of the school's activities centers in an adequate presentation of the Christ of the Bible as the Saviour and Guide of youth. The results which have come from the Sunday-school teaching of the generations past have abundantly justified the consecration of energy which has made them possible, and the future of the church school is bright with promise. A field which has yielded such rich returns during the years ago will still prove the best investment for the Christian worker who seeks to find the treasures of life and character for the Church that is yet to be.

## VIII

### YOUNG PEOPLE ORGANIZED FOR SERVICE

A PRINCIPLE recognized among educators as a basis of effective teaching is, "No impression without expression." In the religious as well as the secular side of life the youth must have avenues for that expression which is as naturally a part of his religious nature as his physical restlessness is a part of his human nature. Any conception of the religious life which limits it simply to matters of belief is not a popular one with young people. The young Christian is ready to show to the world his faith by his works.

The earlier conceptions of religious training afforded but little room for any outward expression. Years ago the Sunday school had but one program for its younger attendants,—they were to sit on a bench and listen respectfully to the teacher, replying perhaps in parrot-like manner to a formal set of questions, for which printed answers were already provided; or else to repeat from memory random verses from the Scriptures (often selected for their brevity). Any other opportunity for religious activity was limited indeed; although a few young persons would occasionally break through their narrowed environment and become

even in youth useful as teachers or religious leaders. Generally speaking, however, such activities were not expected, and the young disciple was required to wait patiently until the days of maturity should fit him to be of service in Christian work.

The opportunities for religious expression have multiplied many fold in a generation. The young people of the Church never had such unlimited fields in which to labour for their Master and voice their message as to-day. Such results have come to pass largely because of the efforts on the part of the leaders of the Church to develop the hidden resources of youth, and are a direct result of the modern idea of organizing the young life for Christian service.

The most prominent organization for training in the details of Christian service is the young people's society. It may be said that the young people's movement,—represented by the Christian Endeavour, the Epworth League, the Baptist Young People's Union, and kindred organizations—has virtually been the religious emancipator of the young. Dr. Francis E. Clark, the originator of the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour, said that this organization "took the padlock off from woman's mouth." And this statement is probably true of those churches which formerly held to the literal interpretation of St. Paul's advice that "the women keep silence in the churches."

The genesis of the Christian Endeavour move-

ment, as described by Dr. Clark, shows how the new organization was the direct outgrowth of a need which he as a pastor felt in dealing with the adolescent youth of his congregation. He writes:

“In the winter of 1880-81 in connection with some Sunday-school prayer meetings, quite a number of boys and girls of my congregation seemed hopefully converted. Their ages ranged from ten to eighteen, most of them being over fourteen years old. The question became serious, How shall this band be trained, how shall they be set to work, how shall they be fitted for church membership? . . . Stimulated and guided by an article of Dr. Cuyler's concerning a young people's association in his own church, I asked the young Christians to my house to consider the formation of a society for Christian work. They responded in large numbers, and after talking the matter over, finding them eager and wishing to enter upon religious duties, we formed a society of Christian Endeavour of some sixty members.”

Various scattered organizations for young people had existed previous to the formation of the Christian Endeavour, but the society organized by Dr. Clark, at Williston, Maine, February 2, 1881, was the real beginning of a popular movement destined to spread over the world, binding together the youth of all lands in the ties of Christian fellowship and service. The publicity given—and the success attending—this new movement doubtless assisted in the organization of the great denominational young people's societies, the largest of which is the Epworth League.



This Methodist organization was virtually a union of five different societies, which had flourished for some time previous, most of them having been organized during the 80's. The new society, —organized at Cleveland, Ohio, May 14, 1889,—sprang into rapid favour, and the League took the place of the Christian Endeavour in the Methodist churches generally. Other societies, with kindred objects, had their beginnings also within the ten or fifteen years following Dr. Clark's Endeavour program, and the young people's society became a regular feature of the church's work.

The aims of these societies as originally stated reveal a tendency to the self-centered type of Christianity. The Endeavour pledge, as originally set forth, contains promises to read the Bible and pray every day, to attend the meetings of the society and take part, and several general statements, such as, "as far as I know how through my whole life I will endeavour to lead a Christian life," "I promise to be true to all my duties," and "I will strive to do whatever He would like to have me do." The pledge relates to individual Christian duties, and unless the general statements are supposed to include the idea, there is no promise to consider the needs of our fellow men. The Epworth League had as its originally pronounced aim, "to promote an earnest, intelligent, practical and loyal spiritual life in the young people of our church, to aid them in constant growth in grace and in the attainment of purity of heart." This too is an individualistic religion, and it speaks well for the sagacity of the

leaders of the society that very soon afterward the aim of the society was revised and worded as follows:

“ The object of the League is to promote intelligent and loyal piety in the young members *and friends* of the Church, to aid them in the attainment of purity of heart and in constant growth in grace, *and to train them in works of mercy and help.*”

Recognition of the claims of others upon the young Christian's sympathy and help is voiced in such an interpretation of the Christian life. The increase of this social spirit in the Church as a whole has no doubt been fostered in large degree by the young people's movement. The Church's wider conception of the Christian life has been but the natural outcome of the recreational, philanthropic and missionary activities of these societies. The awakened missionary interest, the program of Christian stewardship, and the Church's attempt to provide a clean and uplifting recreational life for the young,—all these are but the fruitage from the systematic training given in these organizations during the past generation.

The most daring achievements of faith have not seemed too great for the organized youth of the Church. At the International Christian Endeavour convention at Los Angeles in 1913 a motto was adopted—“A saloonless United States in 1920,” and an aggressive campaign was organized against the liquor traffic. The chairman of the temperance division in presenting his report to the

great convention expressed the hope of a Federal constitutional amendment which should prohibit the manufacture and sale of liquor. The realization of such high hopes seemed farther off to those of mature age, but youth was able to prophesy with an assurance born of faith.

Years before this, at a great denominational convention of young people a paper was circulated for signatures, in which the signers agreed to subscribe only for daily newspapers which should refuse to publish saloon advertising. At that time all the leading dailies of that state published such advertising. Within a short time after the movement became public, three leading dailies of the state excluded the offensive advertising from their columns.

Not only in movements of reform and social betterment has the young people's society shown its power, but in a directly religious way the new movement has exercised a most salutary influence upon the Church. The fact that an organization has maintained for more than a generation weekly devotional meetings in hundreds of thousands of churches from the smallest chapel to the costliest city temple, and still continues its spiritual sway over each succeeding group of young folks, entitles it to serious consideration as a vital force in religious education. Of all the character-making influences of the young people's society none has such possibilities for deep and lasting impressions upon the inner life of youth as that afforded by the Sunday evening devotional hour. It adds

inspiration to the imaginative youth to think of this hour of worship as linking him with a wide brotherhood of his fellows, many of them in lands afar, and if he has made any serious preparation for the service, either as leader or participant,—his heart will be in tune with the spirit of the original verses given by a young lady who led a certain devotional meeting of the Epworth League, where I chanced to worship with the church's gathered youth:

“In the quiet of the evening,  
As the shadows gently fall,  
We meet as one to worship  
In the churches large and small.

“For we sit in the twilight shadows  
As the eventide is near,  
And here we discuss our problems  
From hearts that are often drear.

“We hear our comrades purpose  
To walk in the better ways,  
And vow again within us  
To be true through all our days.

“We find the days are brighter,—  
Friendships more sweet and strong  
For the evenings spent together  
With the League in prayer and song.”

In addition to the young people's society as a training force for young life, the organized Sunday-school class has more recently come into prominence. The activities of the class are similar to the activities of the society, and in the smaller



church quite frequently nearly the same group of young people belong to both. Church leaders are beginning to feel that there should be some co-ordination of work that would prevent a needless duplication of effort. If this is not done by denominational leaders it should be accomplished by each local church for itself.

As a rule, young people themselves will not protest against the multiplication of organizations, for the natural instinct of the adolescent is to organize. The results of a questionnaire sent out by Dr. Henry D. Sheldon show somewhat of the spontaneity of the organization mania among boys when we note that of 1,034 responses from boys from ten to eighteen years of age, eight hundred and fifty-one were members of clubs or clans which they had organized for themselves. Sunday-school authorities have taken advantage of this natural desire, and the organized class is now being extensively used as a means of creating a beneficial class spirit and extending the influence of the school.

Both the church school and the young people's society are being used as effective agencies in the training of young people in organized church work. Without the assistance of some special training the officers of the Church of the future will have little idea of the importance and scope of their work. A pastor, offering one of his young men a place on the official board of the church, said, "Will, how would you like to become a steward?" And Will, whose home was not more than a mile

from New York harbour, answered, "Steward? What boat?" The time for the training of the church official is not when he is needed to fill some responsible position in the gift of the church, but years before the need arises, that the fit man may be at hand when the crisis is upon us.

The present system of graded instruction in our Sunday schools which is rapidly displacing the uniform lessons, is the basis of the effective class organization scheme which necessarily associates itself with it. Though the idea of graded classes—many of them with organized activities—found acceptance long before the new graded lesson system was put into use, the graded class and the graded lesson are both necessary to a successful program of religious training. The first beginnings of the specialized Sunday-school class are found at a much earlier date than the young people's society, for the earliest normal training class of which we have any record was organized at Joliet, Illinois, in 1857. The present teacher training classes are an outgrowth of this normal class idea, and the name of Dr. J. H. Vincent, of Chautauqua fame, is forever associated in our thought with this early teacher-training idea. The effectiveness of the graded program of teaching depends upon the trained teacher. The Sunday school whose future teaching force will be the most proficient is the one who has in training at the present time a group of young folks as a reserve force from which may be drawn the workers for the coming day. The cause of the ineffectiveness

of the Sunday-school teaching of past years is due to the fact that we have "lived from hand to mouth" in our provision of our working force, rather than lay foundations for the future by preparing our teachers for their task.

A similar foresight will provide for other leadership needs. The conservation of the musical talent lying practically dormant in the children and the youth of the Church will give the coming Church a wealth of melody and music from which to draw for future needs. The coming ministers and missionaries are even now hearing their call to service, and the Church of the present must give them a chance to sail their craft within the home harbour ere they launch their boats upon unfriendly seas.

The success of any organization dealing with the adolescent youth will be determined by a recognition of the laws of the world of youth, the violation of which will shatter the most elaborately constructed system. In the earlier years of adolescence, especially, the organization will do well to regard the law of sex separation. It is a question if the mixture of the sexes in religious meetings does not tend to hamper the development of a natural devotional life,—especially on the part of boys. Even among mature men I have noted a freedom of religious expression in men's meetings which it was difficult to secure when in a devotional service composed of men and women. The comingling of several age groups together is not conducive to harmony in teaching or administration. The failure of the junior young people's society



has been largely due to the fact that in the old-time Junior Endeavour or Junior League, the primary, junior and intermediate years were put together in one organization. Those who have attempted to superintend such work will remember how the big boys annoyed the smaller children when they were assembled together, and their own failure in attempting to interest so many children of varied interests and tastes. The same incongruity manifests itself in a different form when the gray-headed constituency persists in filling up the pews at the young people's service on Sunday evening.

The effectiveness of the young people's society as an outlet for the service activities of the young can only be secured by maintaining it as a young folks' organization. Some effective measures must be used to make this possible. One pastor found on taking charge of a new church that the young people's service was crowded with people in mature life, while only a scant half dozen youths were present. The first meeting the pastor attended he listened to several speeches by a gentleman eighty years of age who deplored the fact that the young people would not come out to the meetings of the society. After this view of the situation the pastor gently suggested that if the young people came they would find no place to sit down, since the seats were all occupied by their elders. He ventured further to request that every one over forty years of age stay away from the young people's meeting and give the youth of the church



a chance. It was not long before the seats were filled with young people who carried on for themselves a most successful evening service. While it may be possible to use one or two maturer persons whose sympathy and training make possible a ready fellowship with the young, the society on the whole should be officered and managed by the young people themselves.

In the same manner as those who preceded him, the young Christian of to-day will learn only by *doing*. He does not have the spirit of the East Indian high caste father, who, because his son must learn a trade at the mission school, wished to send a servant to do the work that his son might not degrade himself by common toil. "My son can learn by watching the servant work," he said. Youth is not so haughty as to reject a menial task nor so fearful of failure as to refuse a great one. It appeals to his spirit of independence to have upon him the responsibility afforded by these Christian organizations—the opportunity of doing things worth while for himself and others.

The youth will reach his highest point of usefulness in the kingdom of Christ only by an attachment to the spiritual ideal. The conscientious adolescent who has been raised in a Christian environment readily accepts the most solemn pledges, inspiring slogans, uplifting mottoes, and broad declarations of principles. He wants to reach the best. In middle and later adolescence his social instincts incline his thought to others, and in this period the "Win-my-chum" activities

of the Epworth League and the "lookout committee" spirit of the Christian Endeavour appeal to his religious life. This idea has been effectively used by the Baraca young men's Sunday-school class, in their "secret service,"—an inner circle pledged to pray every day for the unconverted members of the class.

Some experiences of the writer with the practical workings of organized classes for young men and women are very pleasant to recall. In one Sunday school where the combined attendance of the young people of both sexes did not average more than six or eight, these organized classes were established. With a nucleus of two boys to start with, a class of forty boys and young men above the age of sixteen was brought together. Some of them had not been in Sunday school since their primary days, but the zest with which they entered on their work was good to behold. The young women's class prospered as well, and at the end of a three years' pastorate nearly one hundred young people were associated with that church and Sunday school. The church at that place, though more than a dozen years have passed, still feels the impetus that came from those years of work with the organized classes of that school.

It is not possible to here recount the varied activities of these classes. The town was small and the recreational opportunities were few. The young fellows held frequent socials; conducted a physical culture class for the boys; had a champion team of sure-enough Sunday-school fellows during

the baseball season, and in many ways made an impression for good upon the life of the community. The young people were active as well in working to build up attendance at the church services and Sunday school. One boy brought in a dark-skinned Greek from the gang of section hands who lived in a box car near the depot, who gave respectful attention to the teaching in the class and was welcomed at the social gatherings until he finally left with the gang for another field of labour. Best of all, I count it a great privilege to have received into the church a number of those promising young folks, among whom were some stalwart young fellows whose profession of Christian faith was a direct result of the work of the organized class movement.

The experiences narrated here might be accompanied by other instances from the writer's memory, for the organized work for young people has been a prominent part of the work in a number of delightful pastorates in the middle west. From these young people's societies and classes a goodly number have gone forth into the service of the maturer Christian life whose joy in home and Church and college has been enhanced by the memories of the spiritual and social associations of the earlier days in "the little brown church in the vale."

## IX

### THE COLLEGE AND ITS REACH

**T**HE college is the storm center of the intellectual and spiritual progress of Christendom. Given youth and the school one can change the thought life of the world in a generation. Notwithstanding the close association between scholastic learning and life's higher ideals, our institutions of learning have suffered the keenest criticism. A wealthy manufacturer said some time ago, "I have known some men who made a success in life in spite of a college education." Within church circles both state and denominational colleges are subjected to censure by those who question the soundness of their religious ideals.

Very largely, however, both Church and state are indebted to the college for the leadership which it has produced. Less than one per cent of American men are college graduates, but out of this one per cent has come fifty-five per cent of our Presidents and Vice Presidents, over one-third of our members of Congress, and nearly seventy per cent of the justices of the Supreme Court. The far-seeing minds who have led in religious reforms were developed in a college environment. Such religious leaders as Wyclif and Huss, and Luther



and Melancthon, and the Wesleys and Whitefield, were all university men.

The public, who lives so much apart from the university atmosphere, as well as the thoughtless churchman who is sometimes lavish in his criticisms, knows little how closely the school and religion are identified with each other's success. The first college established in this country was named for the Rev. James Harvard, who gave half his fortune to its endowment. The names of other schools are also typical of the religious character of their founders. It is related that two visitors to the campus of old Wesleyan University, at Middletown, Connecticut, were heard discussing John Wesley. One said, "I seem to forget about John Wesley. Who was he?" The other replied in the most positive tones, "You surely know of him. He was the founder of this college."

Regardless of the fact that the cause of higher education owes so much to the Church, it has come to be the case in the college as well as the high school, that some educators have separated the thought of religion and morals from the university courses of study, and in many of these institutions the appeal to the religious nature of the youth is practically negligible. As an instance of a sensitive condition of mind regarding anything approaching religious teaching we note that a few years ago a book on political economy was turned down by a certain state institution. The author, asking for the reason of its rejection, was told, "Your first sentence is enough to condemn the

book." The sentence referred to was, "The source of all wealth is the beneficence of God."

The complete separation of the university from the ideals of the moral and religious life has doubtless had much to do with the multiplication of the church colleges. The influence of these church colleges in setting a high standard of moral ideals, as well as a growing dissatisfaction with their own colourless religious life, has caused many of the secular schools to change their attitude toward religious and moral teaching, and unite with church authorities in trying to cultivate the moral life of the students. A president of a large state university is quoted as saying:

"When I was first in this university I was a professor in the science department. Although a Christian man, I took no interest in the religious affairs of the university. I thought that might belong to some one else. My work was to teach science. Later I became dean of the department and gave myself to its organization and administration. The chapel of the university and the church had very little interest for me, but now that I am president and am charged with the responsibility of seeing the total university life and planning for its greatest success, I am convinced that the most important matter on this campus is the spiritual life and I am giving myself to it in every possible way."

Some indication of the religious interest of the instructors in state colleges may be seen in the fact that out of 7,545 teachers in forty-seven of these institutions, five hundred and two are teachers of Bible classes, seven hundred and twenty-six

are church officials, and 4,073 are members or attendants at local churches. In addition to the more positive religious influences in college life, an examination of the curricula of two hundred and ninety colleges regarding the courses given in the Bible and religion is of interest. Prof. W. C. Gibbs, an educator in a Missouri college, who made the tabulation, shows that all of these institutions but twenty-one gave courses in Biblical and religious subjects. It was noted that four hundred and forty teachers and executive officers were engaged in teaching these courses. The character of the studies ranged all the way from the simple study of New Testament Greek to an elaborate department of Biblical literature. The comparatively small number of students taking this work, and the fact that but few of the schools have specialists in this department, led the investigator to conclude that we have not yet reached ideal conditions in college Bible study.

In addition to the charges of religious indifference in the faculty, and the lack of positive ethical training in our schools, the moral character of the students has been the subject of much criticism. Conditions in the student body of many institutions are far from what they should be, but it is interesting to note that the religious life of the college student seems to be more vigorous than in the days of our fathers. The Christian Almanac for the year 1822 gives religious statistics of twelve leading universities and colleges. Harvard had two hundred and ninety-one students, of whom seven-



teen were "professors of religion." Other institutions lined up as follows—the figures showing first the total enrollment and then the number of professed Christians: Yale, three hundred and sixteen and ninety-seven; Princeton, one hundred and sixteen and twenty-five; Dartmouth, one hundred and forty-six and sixty-five; Williams, eighty-three and forty-two; Middlebury, one hundred and forty-eight; Union College, two hundred and fifty-five and sixty-six. The total number of students in the twelve colleges was 1,821, with five hundred and nine professed Christians,—one in about three and a half. Some light is shown upon the present church affiliation of students by a recent census of the University of Chicago,—which has been denounced by some as a "godless" school. A recent religious census of the school shows that eighty-eight per cent of the students are connected with some organized religious body, and only three students characterize themselves as atheistic or agnostic. One-eighth of the students are engaged in some form of religious work. During the academic year nine-tenths of the students attend some religious service at least once a month, and half of that number attend at least twice a month. As a wider indication of the attitude of the college student toward the Church it may be noted that statistics gathered by the Inter-Church World Movement show that ten large state institutions having a total enrollment of 36,802, have a student church membership of 22,593, with 5,773 indicating a preference for some church. The proportion



of church members in this whole student body is nearly eighty per cent.

It is quite probable that the larger number of students who enter our colleges are from homes that are nominally Christian. A study of the religious preferences of the students in the state university of Minnesota, by Dr. S. M. Dick, of Minneapolis, based upon a comparison of the religious statistics of the state with the student census, brought him to the conclusion that eleven times as many students came from Christian homes as from non-Christian homes. Coming from a home environment that is often more favourable to the conservation of religious ideals than the average college, it is small wonder that the student often experiences a moral shock as a result of temptations which threaten to destroy his religious life. Once it was customary to locate colleges—especially those denominational in character—several miles away from the city in some retired spot where moral dangers were not supposed to be so rife. But to-day our great institutions of learning are in the metropolis, and the student from the rural districts must get used to the urban atmosphere.

The temptations of college life present themselves with peculiar insistence, and the specious plea that "everybody does it" will seem sufficient reason for changing his code of personal ethics. No student who regards the final outcome of the habit will permit himself to think for an instant of weakening his moral and intellectual foundation by the use of false expedients with which to pass ex-

amination tests. And yet the practice of dishonest methods,—the constant use of printed English translations of the classics, and the riding of “ponies”—was so common in one western university that a few years ago the chancellor of the institution was forced to make a public plea to the school convocation for the discontinuance of such conduct. The most subtle and inoffensive temptation is usually that of taking college life too easy. In my own college days it was jokingly said of some students that their course of study was “football, chapel, and campus.” It is quite true as a recent magazine writer has said, that “college life offers all the possibilities in the world for teaching a man to have a great incapacity for work.” It is certain that the development which a college education brings to the youth is only commensurate with the personal coöperation of the student. Unfortunately there are many who, through lack of mental furnishings, and possibly moral fibre, will not yield themselves to even the best educational program.

This situation reminds one of a somewhat humorous story of two men who were walking over a very stony field. The man who owned the field was telling the other of his intention to give his son a thorough education,—“all that he can possibly take in,” as he expressed it. His companion was quite deaf, and as they went on over the field so thickly strewn with stones and gravel, supposing that his friend was speaking of the irrigating of the soil of the field, he said, “You

can pour on all you're a-mind to; but it won't soak in."

The mental failure of the student, however, is not so sorrowful a thing as the moral wrecks which it must be admitted come from our halls of learning. Some of them carry diplomas and all the honours of graduation; and others have simply fallen out by the way and brought forth not even intellectual fruitage. The failure of the church college to save even the boy and girl of Christian homes and start them out with a moral fitness to be of service in life has sometimes occasioned a prejudice against the Christian school. Not long ago a layman wrote to his bishop concerning the irreligious state of a near-by college of his denomination. The bishop wrote to the disconsolate brother:

"From my childhood I have been familiar with every argument I have ever heard against your college, as they have been used against our denominational colleges. Fifty years ago I heard the same stories. Changing the name of the college and the names of the students in each set of incidents one would need to change no other parts. . . . I have broken my heart over two or three cases which I have sent to our Christian colleges. I have seen children go right out of warm Christian homes to our Christian schools, get in with the wrong crowd of youngsters and instead of becoming deepened in their spiritual life and broadened in their vision of service for Christ, lose what religious impulse had moved them to begin their Christian education. I have seen all this, and still I am a devout and enthusiastic believer in our whole line of denominational schools, for what one must look at is not items



but totals; not particular instances, but the broad general influence of such institutions. The significant thing is that in all these years these same colleges about whom perfectly true stories of back-sliding, etc., can be told, have been furnishing our Church with her evangelists, her prophets, her preachers, and her godly and intelligent laymen, insomuch that had it not been for their services . . . the supply of our ministers both at home and abroad would have practically dried up."

As the bishop has indicated, the associates which the student finds in his college years either make or mar his character. The boy or girl who attends the co-educational institution has the opportunity to form friendships that are mutually helpful, as well as to find an affinity which shall result in a life partnership under most favourable auspices. It would seem as though the likeness of mental equipment and affinity of tastes should make for the best happiness in the home life which follows college. The character of a college trained woman—especially if educated in a Christian school—should make her in every way better fitted to be a real helpmeet to her husband and an ideal mother to her child. Later college life is the normal period for the first serious steps toward a matrimonial alliance. But even the earlier years will witness the beginnings of comradeships which mean much to the character of every student.

The immature age at which our young people are entering college should especially be considered in dealing with the moral needs of the student. From records kept for a number of years past at



Princeton University it is stated that the average age of students at entrance is 18.7 years. With the peculiar conditions of adolescent years, heightened no doubt by sudden transplanting into a strange environment the young freshman in his "critical first year"—as it has been denominated by a leading educator—deserves all consideration at the hand of parent and instructor. The natural solicitation of the parent will follow the child, and the school which accepts so serious a charge as the development of a young life cannot afford to be careless concerning its moral atmosphere.

Talking with her son on the eve of his departure for college, a mother said, "Of course you will affiliate yourself at once with our university church." The son answered, "O yes, I will, but of course you know, mother, that the university students do not go to church." But on the first Sunday of the school year,—though the young freshman did not know it,—six hundred students of that very college were at the morning service of his own church adjoining the campus, and in the evening three hundred and fifty-nine students attended the young people's meeting. On the second Sunday of the year two hundred and fifty freshmen came into affiliated membership with that church,—and let us hope that the boy who thought college students did not attend church was among that number.

The Church has never recognized its responsibility for the religious life of the college student as it does to-day. The encouragement afforded by

the officials of state institutions in recent years to this feature of the Church's work, and the far-sighted planning of church leaders has resulted in an organized plan for the carrying on of this work. The various denominations have appointed pastors to the university students, church headquarters have been erected contiguous to the campus of the schools, and religious and social work is carried on with the students. The pastors of local churches also assist in this work, and the Sunday services in these college centers are arranged especially with the spiritual welfare of the students in mind. Various courses in Bible study and general religious themes are provided in connection with the Sunday schools,—these classes being taught by university men with the same earnestness of purpose that characterizes the week day studies of the university. The various churches of Iowa City, where the University of Iowa is located, have twenty of these classes, one church alone maintaining eight different courses.

The good results of persistent religious work among the students of a state university can be seen in the fact that at the University of Iowa there has been a one hundred and forty per cent increase in the church membership of the body, while the per cent of increase in school enrollment has been but one hundred and twenty-eight. A recent tabulation of the church attendance of students at Iowa City shows a Sunday attendance of 1,668, with seven hundred and fifty-five attending young people's society and eight hundred and

sixty-three in special training and Bible classes. The officers and leaders of the young people's societies are largely students, and fifty per cent of the members of the church choirs are students. The church attendance is so largely made up of the student body—so statements issued by the school authorities say—that “were it not for the students congregations would often be small indeed.” A Presbyterian minister, president of the Ministerial Union of the city, says, “It is necessary for all of us constantly to bear in mind that we are preaching and speaking to young people.”

For a good many years past the Young Men's Christian Association and the Young Women's Christian Association have maintained organizations in the colleges both state and denominational. For a long time these societies were the only religious features of the state supported school. The pioneer work of these associations in assisting both the social and religious life of college students has doubtless contributed in large degree to the success of the present efforts for the religious welfare of the college student.

As an outgrowth of this work of the association came the student volunteer movement for missions. This movement,—having as its inspiring slogan, “The world for Christ in this generation,”—has exercised a great influence in missionary propaganda, as well as inspiring thousands to give their lives to missionary and evangelistic endeavour. At its national convention held in Des Moines, Iowa, December 31 to January 4, 1919-20, there



were seven thousand delegates present representing one thousand educational institutions. Nearly five hundred students from foreign lands were present. Young people to the number of fifteen hundred who had definitely consecrated themselves to foreign mission work, were among the delegates. Reports showed that since the first volunteer organization was formed over eight thousand from these student associations had gone forth as foreign missionaries. Those who were not present at that great convention or have not attended similar gatherings can scarcely imagine the inspiration to the students present. To watch the intent faces of those multitudes of Christian youth as they were seated in the great Coliseum listening to the greatest religious and missionary leaders of the day, or to hear them singing with the fervour of youth "The Son of God goes forth to war," was to be born anew to the belief in the revolutionary power of the intelligent zeal and faith of the Christian student. One minor result of such a gathering is illustrated by the remark of a young Princeton student who said to his associates, "Well, fellows, I know what this means for me; it means that I must go back home and evangelize my own father 'in this generation.'"

It is of interest to note that the modern movement for missionary work was the outgrowth of a small gathering of college students in an early day, upon whose hearts there was dawning a realization of the Church's obligation to the non-Christian world. At Williamsburg, Mass., a unique



monument marks the place where, on Saturday afternoon in August, 1806, five young fellows,—students of Williams College,—met for a prayer meeting. The monument is marked “The birth-place of American foreign missions,” and contains the names of Samuel J. Mills and his four associates who attended what has since been called “the haystack prayer meeting.” The story of the meeting is as follows: It was a hot, sultry day, when the students started out to a grove where they had a daily prayer meeting as a part of the revival series then in progress in the college. A sudden thunder shower coming up, the boys sought refuge under a neighbouring haystack. There their conversation turned upon Asia, which the East India Company was just opening up. As they discussed the moral degradation and spiritual need of that continent, Mills proposed the idea of sending the Gospel to Asia, saying, “We can do it, if we will.” They then engaged in prayer for this object. All these students were active Christians, and their first zealous outbursts for the faith were backed up by their lifetime labours in telling the Gospel story. The memorable “haystack prayer meeting” with its far-reaching results is acknowledged as the force from which came the American Board of Foreign Missions.

The college years have been the period when many a young person has definitely entered the Christian life. The venerable Bishop Bowman, of the Methodist Church, on being asked when he became a Christian said that he was converted at

Cazenovia Seminary at the age of fifteen, adding that a large number of other young people were also brought in at that time. Three factors probably contributed to the conversion of the good bishop. First, that parental foresight that selected a school for the boy with high moral influences in view; and second, the influence of that Christian school upon the youth; while as the third agency we may name the associates who started with him the Christian life, who by their combined purpose encouraged one another in their good resolutions.

The students who have received in any degree a spiritual vision in their college years have gone out to take their places in the world with profound gratitude to the college that has equipped them both mentally and spiritually for their task. From both state and denominational colleges have come forth those whose spiritual service to the world is of large worth. John R. Mott, celebrated in missionary annals, is the combined product of the church and secular school. Howard H. Russell, founder of the Anti-Saloon League, is a graduate of Oberlin; while William E. Goodfellow, who was largely instrumental in establishing the public school system of Latin America, came from a Christian school in southern Michigan. William McKinley was a graduate of Alleghany College, and said, "Whatever I have gained in willingness and ability to tackle large and hard jobs, I gained at that Christian college."

The opportunity of the Christian college student to serve his fellows was illustrated in a remarkable

way by the experience of one man in the critical time of the Boxer uprising in China in 1900. Something over forty years ago a young man was studying civil engineering in a college in New York state. About the time his course was finished he gave himself to the foreign service of the Church. Some of his friends thought it a strange waste of brilliant talents. He spent twenty years in teaching in a Chinese college at Peking. Suddenly the Boxer rebellion burst out in the city, and the American and European residents were huddled together for safety in the British legation. Then Frank Gamewell, "the Yankee missionary," stepped forth, and from his knowledge of civil engineering directed the building of fortifications and organized the plan of defense. His scientific skill made possible the heroic stand which saved the lives of the ambassadors of America and Europe, the defenseless Chinese Christians, the missionaries of both Catholic and Protestant faith, and the multitude of no faith whatsoever, and showered upon him the heartfelt thanks of a grateful world.

The college whose ideals are uplifting, whose atmosphere is morally stimulating, and whose leaders are Christian, has an outreach which touches the far borders of the earth.

## X

### HABITS AND AMUSEMENTS

**H**ERBERT SPENCER once said, "By no political alchemy can you get golden conduct from leaden instincts." Conduct is the manifestation of moral life and this life is the sum total of personal habits. Any process of education or discipline which ignores the potency of habit and association is but a political alchemy which is ineffectual in producing golden deeds. Lives which constantly travel on low levels will never soar upon angel's wings. Nature is kind enough to give wings to carrion birds, and bring a butterfly out of a worm, but the best character in mankind is only developed in a soul atmosphere of purity and nourished by righteous acts.

The greatest hindrances to the Christian character of youth are the impediments of evil habits and dangerous recreations. The moral problems of the adolescent are indicted by their frequent questionings concerning behaviour: "Why can't I ——?" "What is the harm in ——?" "Is it wrong to ——?" The school years, whether of high school or college, are especially filled with these solicitations to cross the thin ice of forbidden rivers.

In spite of the fact that for many years the



minor youth of the country have been legally safeguarded against alcohol, it is a known fact that the intemperate habits of many boys were formed long before their majority. A reformed drunkard, after twenty-nine years of experience with the habit, published his story in one of our leading magazines a few years since. Among other things mentioned he said that his observation showed that fifty per cent of saloon patrons in his bibulous days were minors. He describes his own experience in beginning the habit as follows:

“At fourteen years of age I drank my first glass of beer in a saloon in a most natural way. Seeing me hot and perspiring one summer afternoon, a saloon-keeper offered me a glass of bottled beer, saying, ‘You’re old enough to drink beer now.’ . . . I believe the so-called ‘best people’ are not aware of the fact that drinkers and drunkards are originally made by illegal liquor selling to minors. I know that the perpetuation of the saloon business is based on minors forming the habit of liquor drinking at the earliest possible age.”

The drink habit has been, and is still to some extent, a menace to the student in his school career. The high school as well as the college youth has suffered in this regard. Some local instances of the pernicious influence of drinking students in public schools as well as some scientific data gathered by others, affords sufficient proof that the boys in secondary schools are not safe from the allurements of intoxicating liquor. Only a few years before the saloon was outlawed in this country

several of our eastern colleges were having trouble with the drinking habits of students. Princeton, as well as a number of others, put in force very stringent rules against the use of liquor by the students, and class dinners were made "dry" affairs. Just about this time, President Shanklin, of Wesleyan University, had a saloon-keeper arrested and fined for selling liquor to minor students, and later arranged a conference with the president of the local liquor dealers' association in which it was agreed that no liquor would henceforth be sold to Wesleyan students.

The friends of youth are not to suppose because of past won victories that the young are safe from the temptations of appetite. It is probable that the per cent of drinkers among the younger generation is much less than before the liquor traffic was outlawed, but a large number of drinkers and bootleggers are evidently on the youthful side of life. Sheriff Robb, a vigorous young official at Des Moines, recently said that much of the liquor brought into his state from Canada was clandestinely sold at fabulous prices through the bell-boys in the leading hotels of his city. Mr. Robb also states that the dope habit has taken a terrible hold upon the rising generation. He says that in Des Moines alone there are two thousand young people who are drug addicts, and that at least twenty "dope dens" are in that city. The hopeless condition of one who has been overtaken by this habit is shown by the case of a young man who would come into the court and ask for a sentence of three weeks

that he might get straight again. After a recent imprisonment the sheriff told him he had better take another week and make sure that he was free from the dope. At the end of that week he was let out, supposing himself to be free from the habit. But he was back in three weeks as bad as ever. This has occurred three times. Of all who have been treated for the habit, Mr. Robb says that but one—a young woman—is holding out.

In the thought of many who have considered the relation of youth and the habits of appetite, the use of strong drink and drugs is closely associated with tobacco. Dr. Charles B. Towns, in the *Century Magazine*, makes the following statement:

“The relation of tobacco, especially in the form of cigarettes, and alcohol and opium is a very close one. For years I have been dealing with alcoholism and morphinism; have gone into their every phase and aspect, have kept minute details of between six and seven thousand cases, and I have never seen a case, except occasionally with women, which did not have a history of excessive tobacco. . . . A boy always begins smoking before he begins drinking. If he is disposed to drink, that disposition will be increased by smoking, because the action of tobacco makes it normal for him to feel the need of stimulation. He is likely to go to alcohol to soothe the muscular unrest, to blunt the irritation he has received from tobacco. From alcohol he goes to morphine for the same reason. . . . Morphine is the legitimate consequence of alcohol, and alcohol is the legitimate consequence of tobacco. Cigarettes, drink, opium, is the logical and regular series.”



It is the personal belief of the writer that no more regrettable thing has occurred to youth in the past generation than the popularization of the cigarette in the recent World War. Boys in the teens who had formerly been shielded from tobacco were suddenly taken from the pure atmosphere of Christian homes and introduced to the smoke-laden atmosphere of the army camp, and made to feel that since they were engaged in a man-sized job they could indulge in every manhood vice. Christian people, among them many good motherly souls,—who would not have done such a thing on their own account,—became, through a false notion of patriotism, agents of the American tobacco trust, and through the Red Cross and kindred organizations urged the cigarette upon the American soldier with a persistency which would have been worthy a better cause. The sale of cigarettes increased nearly fifty per cent in the year 1917, and still continues to grow. The laws prohibiting the use and sale of cigarettes in many states—though not well enforced previously—have either been changed, repealed, or constantly disregarded, and the established facts concerning the deleterious effect of tobacco seem to have been forgotten.

Educators and social workers speak with no uncertain sound however concerning the serious physical, mental, and moral effects of tobacco, and the cigarette especially. An examination of the grades of students in the Ohio Wesleyan University, conducted by Dean W. G. Hormell in the



years 1911 to 1913, shows that during these two college years sixteen per cent of the high grades and fifty-two and three-eighths per cent of the low grades were obtained by the smokers, while eighty-four per cent of the high grades and forty-seven and five-eighths per cent of the low grades were obtained by non-smokers. Testimony of like character comes from numerous college authorities. Dr. Henry Churchill King, when president of Oberlin College, said: "I am entirely clear in my own mind that the use of tobacco, at least by men under twenty-five, is to be vigorously opposed, partly on considerations of health, partly on considerations of intellectual development, and partly on moral considerations."

Just how prevalent are questionable and immoral habits in community and public school life to-day we cannot be sure. A school superintendent in a certain western city, known as a center of education and moral culture, said recently that the pupils of the schools down to the first grade were indulging in cigarettes. A chief of police, commenting on the laxity of morals among the young boys and girls of his city, said: "More trouble comes from the unchaperoned automobile ride, especially late at night, than from all other irregularities combined." Prof. Jesse B. Davis, of Grand Rapids, Michigan, gives the results of a discreet investigation conducted by a student committee in a certain high school composed of six hundred and fourteen boys, as follows: thirteen and seven-tenths per cent were habitual smokers, while thirty-two and seven-tenths

per cent occasionally indulged; twenty-four per cent engaged in gambling games of various sorts; nine and one-tenth per cent were guilty of drinking liquor—most of whom learned to drink in their own homes; ten and nine-tenths per cent wasted time in questionable resorts; three and two-tenths per cent were impure in personal and social relations.

The various habits which undermine character have a close association with each other. Liquor and lust are twin sisters. The pockets of a moral degenerate usually contain a deck of cards and a plug of tobacco. The realization that bad habits do team work in their attack upon the youth impresses us with the necessity of an effort for the elimination of the whole company of evil spirits that seek to inhabit the citadel of Boy Soul. Regarding the overcoming of the prevalent boyhood vice, the tobacco habit, let us hear from one who has interested himself in the boy as an educator and friend through many years,—William A. McKeever, of the department of Child Welfare in Kansas State University. Professor McKeever tells a striking story of a boy who was struggling to get free from the cigarette habit. “One night at 9:30 I went to the door in response to a feeble rap, and admitted a pale, sixteen-year-old boy, who said, ‘Professor, dogged if I don’t want you to hypnotize me. I smoke four cigarettes in bed every night and about fifty every day,—and I can’t quit.’ I tried to hypnotize the dejected youth, but failed. It was an easy matter however to stir him

emotionally, and as a result of my efforts he sprang to his feet, drew out his 'makings' and presented them to me, pipe, tobacco and all. 'I am done with this forever!' he cried. Whereupon he seized the pipe—an expensive one—broke it, and threw the pieces out into the darkness. 'I will let out my blood with my own knife before I'll ever smoke again,' he exclaimed. 'Oh, I wish my mother were here.' "

The sequel of the incident is the melancholy part of it all. With the weakened will of the drug addict the boy met the old cravings the next day and fell again; borrowing the "makings" he took a big smoke, for then nothing else seemed reasonable to him. Professor McKeever says, "The more I work with these confirmed cases the more I am convinced of the futility of attempting a complete permanent cure. . . . No ordinary youth confirmed in the habit can break it off without the help of some very strong outside influence, and then the struggle will be a desperate one."

In dealing with the youth concerning this and other dangerous habits the most effective campaign is a preventive one. An educational campaign should be launched, backed by all the Christian and educational forces. With pulpit and press and parent on the side of clean habits and with a clear note of teaching and example on the part of school instructors the youth will be turned to the right path and saved from some of the habits that now seem so prevalent. A very effective moving picture film can be obtained for free use from the



Battle Creek Sanitarium, which gives the most complete scientific facts regarding the tobacco evil. The appeal most effective with the youth will doubtless be the physical appeal. Instances may be cited to the growing boy of athletes who abstain for the good of their bodies,—that they may be on the winning side. Scientific data such as that gathered at Yale College, where during nine years' study of the students it was found that the lung capacity of non-smokers developed seventy-seven per cent more than that of smokers, may be given. While the moral exhortation should not be neglected, the challenge to the physical will often prove a more effective deterrent than a standard of moral excellence.

The manhood vices and the moral victories are largely the result of the social environment. What is customary on the part of chums, and what is popular in "our set," fixes the standard of living for many a youth despite any moral pleas which may be uttered by teacher or friend. With this suggestion as an aid to a campaign against youthful follies or a constructive program of moral effectiveness, the modern worker with young people will understand that the amusement life of youth is the field that must be his first conquest. Happily for the youth of to-day the Church is awaking to the religious importance of the recreational life. The play life has come into a new heritage during the past few years which has resulted in a constructive program of play activities which has revolutionized the Church's approach to the young.



The moral value of play has appealed to municipalities in such a way that our large cities have appropriated millions of dollars for play advantages. The colleges and public schools—which were pioneers in recognizing the value of athletic sports to their students—have given themselves to an even larger appreciation of the physical and recreational side of life.

This new awakening to the value of the play life has produced a literature which is voluminous. Several years ago when this author wrote a book on the character value of play, there were few books treating the question and the searching of a number of large public libraries produced little except periodical literature as a stimulus to the development of the thought of that study of the play question. The literature published by the Church was largely of the negative sort, and that of the school and the municipality was not yet crystallized into bound volumes. As a pioneer in the treatment of the moral value of play, the writer has witnessed with much satisfaction the change of attitude on the part of the Church, and the resulting larger hold upon the heart and sympathy of young life. But with all this, we must guard ourselves from the danger of any excesses which shall impress our youth with the idea that the supreme purpose in life is simply to have a good time. A reasonable consideration of the effect of the pleasure program upon the life will appeal as well to the fair-minded and conscientious youth.

As an instance of the discrimination of Chris-

tian youth concerning amusement features it may be mentioned that the Christian Endeavour Society, gathered in state convention at Grand Rapids, Michigan, adopted strong resolutions against the showing of moving pictures of the great prize-fight at Reno, Nevada, which were reëchoed in a state convention at Milwaukee. This started a movement which went through the states and was even taken up by the authorities of Cape Town, Calcutta, and Melbourne, and was noted in the English parliament as well.

Somewhat of an idea of the opposite spirit which yields to the corrupt standards of a morally careless environment may be gathered from the following letter of a young girl:

“On the evening of May 14th a girl friend and I went for an auto ride with two young men. On the way home the young man sitting with me suddenly took hold of me and kissed me twice. No great crime according to modern custom—but what dreadful results were to follow! I continued in good health until about June 25, when I noticed a lymph gland enlarged under the right side of my jaw. . . . Early in July I noticed a sore on my upper lip. It grew considerably larger and caused considerable pain when eating. The 21st of July the upper lip became greatly swollen. Three days later, the gland having shown no decrease in size, I consulted my physician. . . . Wasserman reported four plus, and the sore on my lip pronounced chancre. . . .”

The medical man, to whom this confession was made, says concerning the young lady's statement that the kiss was “no great crime,”—“It did prove

a very great crime however. It inflicted the foolish young woman with syphilis." The doctor then says, "Kissing is all very well to make jokes about. Nevertheless a girl who permits such liberty on the part of any man not engaged to her is foolish."

The youth of both sexes will do well to be careful concerning the games and plays which magnify unduly the sex element. The social dance has, in the minds of many who are interested in youth, this objection. Ancient dances—which were patriotic and religious in character—were danced by the sexes separately. The modern dance is quite different from its progenitors, and there are not a few who note its deleterious moral effects. Many will be found to agree with Superintendent Mortenson, of the Chicago high schools, when he says in his "standards of conduct" recently set forth: "We believe that the modern method of dancing has done much to break down respect for womanhood." Without doubt the larger number of those who engage in present day social dancing do so without a single improper thought; but all social workers admit the element of danger connected with the dance, especially if the gathering have no safeguards as to personnel and environment.

No doubt the most important amusement to-day—even more popular than the social dance—is the moving picture show. The industry has grown by leaps and bounds so far as investment, number of theaters, and size of audience is concerned. No



statistics of yesterday concerning these items can be considered as representative to-day. From the beginning the "movies" were popular with young life. The element of surprise, the near miraculous, and the constant activity and variety of the screen show, make strong appeal to the imaginative and wide-awake youth. Numerous questionnaires have shown the large attendance of children at these shows.

Frequent notes of warning are sounded concerning the effect of the moving picture shows on the morals of the rising generation. The suggestions contained in some pictures have doubtless had, in some instances, a bad effect upon young life. A demand for a national censorship of picture films has been heard for some time past. No doubt this demand, as well as certain disclosures concerning the character of leading actors, had much to do with the hiring of the new dictator for the picture interests,—Mr. Will H. Hays—from whose supervision it is hoped the moral conditions of the picture industry may be much improved. Dr. Wilbur F. Crafts, of the International Reform Bureau, who insistently advocated federal control, favoured a commission similar to the interstate commerce commission, with men of the quality of the Supreme Court, to comprise a national board of censorship. The noted reformer said: "My observation is that motion pictures are too powerful an interest for either state or city censorship to handle effectively;—it is the fifth largest industry in the country in money power, and it is



second only to the liquor traffic in its effort to dominate civic bodies in its own interest."

Whether we shall adopt this view of the case or not, we recognize that the power of moral discrimination is left to us,—in the absence of any legal discriminating power. From an attitude that at first was unfriendly to the motion picture show many have come to see its value as a means of instruction and amusement, and in the larger cities at least the variety of pictures shown is such that usually one can select a picture of real merit for their enjoyment. With the increase of a demand for the better class of films quite a wide variety of pictures of a moral and educational character are now offered by the producers. The Y. M. C. A. and the public school have used the films as an adjunct of their work for a long time past, and the popularity of the moving picture in the church is increasing daily.

The discrimination necessary in the selection of the motion picture, either for exhibition or personal enjoyment, applies to other forms of amusement as well. It is possible for the youth to choose his pleasures with a view to what is best for his personal need, just as he would choose his reading or his food. It may be interesting to note the effort of an expert to provide a scientific test for our amusements. Mr. Edward Purinton, an efficiency expert connected with *The Independent* (N. Y.), published an elaborate chart a few years ago in which the desirable and undesirable conditions were indicated by either plus or minus

marks—the neutral being marked O—and the result added to indicate the character of the form of amusement. The tabulation was in the following form—only a small part of the chart being given here:

<i>Actual Condition Hostile</i>	<i>Ideal Condition Favourable</i>	<i>Tennis</i>	<i>Cards</i>	<i>Dance</i>	<i>Mountain Hike</i>
Noise	Silence	0	0	—	x
Hurry	Leisure	—	0	—	x
Regularity	Spontaneity	x	0	x	0
Confinement	Outdoor	x	—	—	x
Expense	Saving	x	x	0	x
Insomnia	Sound Sleep	x	—	0	x
Brain Fag	Relaxation	x	—	—	x
	Totals,	5x 1—	1x 3—	1x 4—	6x
	Value,	4x	2—	3—	6x

It is more than likely however that the strongest factor in deciding the character of the amusements of youth is the amount of influence—either good or bad—exercised by some companion or friend. In fact the whole tenor of life is affected in such a large degree by associates that considerations of lover or sweetheart are often the deciding factors in life's most critical situations. There is room for a complete treatise on the subject of how marriage affects character,—but the limits of our theme forbid more than a passing suggestion. The recreational life offers youth's largest opportunity

for meeting and making love, and the character of the future husband and wife and of the home to be is often determined by the type of social pleasures enjoyed, and the surroundings of the recreational life.

The character of the boy life of a community is moulded in large degree by the moral ideals of the girls. Women and girls who look upon the vices of men with tacit approval will accomplish little toward raising the standard of the world's manhood. A pastor who was called to conduct the funeral services of a farmer who had passed away after a lingering illness, leaving an only son—an ungainly youth—tells of a conversation with the boy on their way to the home. The boy, dressed in an ill-fitting suit of black, was sitting in silence by the preacher's side. The minister respected the silence, believing that the boy was thinking of the dead. But at last the youth spoke of a subject far different:

“So Mabel is married.”

Mabel was a beautiful and popular girl who had taught the district school the year before, and whom the preacher had recently married to a young farmer.

“Yes,” said the preacher, “they were married at the parsonage.”

Again there was a silence, and then the boy spoke again: “I—I—loved her, elder; but I ought to have knowed she was too good for me.”

The preacher waited for the boy to continue, and pretty soon he said, “She made me a Chris-

tian, Mabel did. I used to drive over to Walton with her to hear you preach, and on our way home she would talk to me about the Christian life. One Sunday she got me to decide. I gev up terbacker, too, for her," he went on. "It was awful hard, for I smoked all the time. The first night I was so afraid the boys would ask me where my pipe was that I went to bed as soon as I'd done my chores. But I knowed it would please her. I don't smoke now. I hope she's got a good husband that'll be kind to her."

The eyes of both the preacher and the boy were dimmed with tears, as after an interval Bert said one more thing, "I tell you, elder, these girls don't know what they can do. It's a shame so many of 'em don't half try."



## XI

### YOUTH AND THE COMMUNITY

**T**HE relative influence of education and environment on character is still a debated question. Concerning the "best place" in which to raise a boy or girl there is still a wide divergence of opinion. Once it was a foregone conclusion that the rural life—more preferably the open country—contributed to the best character. But the changed home life of the present day, and the deterioration of church and school facilities in rural communities, have begun to shake the faith of those who formerly thought of the country life as a safe refuge from moral harm.

The city has had a bad moral reputation. The polyglot population, the opportunity for evil to hide itself away among the mass of inhabitants, the strong commercial instincts,—these things have been conducive to a reputation for an evil moral atmosphere. However, in the modern city are found forces that operate for good,—especially in the life of the young,—which are often quite lacking in the smaller community, while the open country is quite destitute of such moral ministries.

The small town has probably had a better moral standing in popular thought than it deserves. So far as its attitude toward youth is concerned, it has

often been very negative if not positively harmful. As one who has spent the larger part of his life in the small town, the writer wishes to register his protest against the indifference of the average rural community to its most valuable human product—youth.

Wherever we find young life—in country, town, or city—it behooves us that the conditions of living shall be made so uplifting and inspiring that the boy or girl may have the feeling of Plutarch who said, “I live in a little town, where I am willing to continue, lest it should grow less.” If the city be his home, it may so impress its individuality upon the boy that he shall share the spirit of Wendell Phillips in his high ideal for his home town when he said, “I love inexpressibly these streets of Boston over whose pavements my mother held up tenderly my baby feet, and if God grants me time enough I will make them too pure to bear the footsteps of a slave.”

Modern treatises on city building fill many pages with a consideration of the material elements; such as wide boulevards, beautiful architecture, and the machinery of government,—and pathetically enough devote little space to the development of the future Plutarchs or Phillips’s that shall arise from the city’s multitudinous youth to people their palaces and walk their streets. It is a fine testimonial to the people of Kansas that a state-wide contest was recently put on in their state to decide which town could qualify as the best place in which to raise children. A prize of one thousand dollars

was offered in 1915 by ex-Governor W. R. Stubbs and wife, and a second prize of five hundred dollars by Mr. Charles A. Horner, of Kansas City. A board of examiners was appointed by Dr. W. A. McKeever, of the state university, and a rigid examination of the social, educational, and religious qualifications of the contesting towns and cities took place. Secret, as well as open, investigations were carried on. After due consideration Winfield received the first prize, and Independence stood second. The appreciation of the public in this quest for a good community life is shown, in some degree at least, that since the award was given people have moved to Winfield in such numbers that the city schools are overcrowded with pupils. A similar contest was recently conducted in Oklahoma, with the result that Shawnee took first place and received a large prize as a reward.

It may be said of communities as well as nations that the proper evaluation of its youth fixes the standard of a people's moral advancement. A man who had widely traveled said that he could judge the character of any community by one unfailing rule. When he went into a town and saw a well-kept cemetery, while on the other hand the school buildings were poor and illy-furnished, he knew that he was among a people whose face was toward the past. If the school buildings were well built and had a look of prosperity and the graveyard ill-kept, he knew the citizens had forgotten the past and were facing toward the future.

It is not necessary that we should think lightly

of the aged or be found wanting in the respect due the dead in order to have a proper appreciation of youth, but it is essential that a forward-looking people shall have due consideration of its debt to the rising generation. The future is wrapped up in the present, and without future resources in citizenship and morals both town and country will be bankrupt both in ethics and efficiency. As an American statesman once said, "We must not grind the seed corn."

The forces which undermine youthful character are often allowed to flourish in our American communities with the full knowledge of the officers of the law and others who are morally—if not legally—responsible for the well-being of the growing youth. A common curse of the small town is often manifest in a secret ring of poker enthusiasts who make it their business to entangle young boys of prosperous families who are easily fleeced by the more expert gambler, while the foundations of future depredations are laid by these designing craftsmen of the underworld. The public pool hall has also proved the ruination of many a boy in the smaller towns. A young man condemned to a penitentiary sentence a few years ago, said in some words of advice to young men, "Keep away from the pool rooms. Get a job that involves hard work. I played 'cinches' all my life; now look at me." The small town is the picking ground for the panderer of the city brothel. A prominent social worker makes the statement that 68,000 young girls in the United States disappeared during



1919. A white slaver confessed in a New York court: "All we have to do is to keep an eye on the little towns and find out when a girl decides to go to the city to get a job. Girls in small towns are always eager to leave home for that purpose. When they arrive in the city we are watching for them."

The slums of the great cities are fed by the smaller communities. In a series of articles published in *Charities and Commons*, Jacob Riis said that in cities small and large there are the same social problems growing which he had found in New York City. He made an earnest plea that these communities "head off the slum" by giving attention to their local situation. The grinding poverty and ravaging disease of the village slum often furnish as tragic incidents as can be related by any city social worker. In a small eastern town a washerwoman's son had been sent to a reformatory for a trivial offense, but when stricken with disease was sent home to die. As a helpless invalid he was left day after day with only the company of a smaller boy while the mother went out to work. The last week of his life, while he was wasting away with the dreaded white plague, the mother was away from home every day. The baby boy would follow his mother to the door and say, "Ferdie will take care of me, mamma; don't cry." The little fellow would crawl up into the sick boy's arms and sit quietly while the older boy told him weird stories in a whispering voice. On the last day the baby came to the door to meet his mother

when she returned from work, saying, "Ferdie's asleep, mamma; but he saw angels with white wings in the room all the afternoon, and talked to them. He told them he was so tired, mamma,—and so am I." Only a few months later the angels with the white wings came after the little fellow also; and thus two children of the slums were added to the city of the dead.

The moral and physical safety of the rising generation is not regulated by the size of the community, so much as by the spirit of the adult population concerning youth. A great nation-wide effort for the appreciation of child life—the recent "Children's Year"—has assisted in awakening interest in the young. The interest aroused in recreational life by the Playground and Recreation Association of America, and the activities of both the Y. M. and Y. W. C. A. have had an influence in raising the community estimate of childhood. In the line of church agencies the week-day school of religious education is perhaps the most important venture in the spiritual development of the community's youth.

The best known effort for the religious training of the child as a community project is the so-called "Gary plan" of week-day religious teaching. Mr. William Wirt, superintendent of the schools of Gary, Indiana, worked out a plan to include religious instruction as a part of the regular study of each child in school. He consulted with the pastors of the churches and told them he would excuse from the school session for one hour each

day, every pupil whose parents might request it, in order that they might be systematically instructed in the Bible and religious faith. The classes organized by church agencies as a result of this plan met for a time in the various church buildings, and were taught the tenets of their own peculiar faith by instructors provided by denominational authorities. An interdenominational plan has more recently been taken up and the pupils are taught at a common meeting place. The courses of study as adopted are submitted to the school superintendent for his approval, but no school credit is given for the work.

Many similar plans of religious instruction have since been adopted in cities and villages through the country from New York and Chicago to communities of only a few hundred population. Vacation Bible schools, with a varied course of play, manual training, and religion, are also becoming more popular every year, and the foundation of a community religious life is being laid by these efforts which will in time leaven the national character in a most marked way.

Unfortunately, many of these efforts for the betterment of youth have not yet reached the open country. The Y. M. C. A. has extended its work to rural fields, and county secretaries are now conducting recreational and Bible study work which is of real help to many boys of the country districts. This work is essentially a community effort, in which the secretary enlists prominent individuals of the country town or neighbourhood in



practical work for the boys. One who writes of this work in a Detroit paper says:

“Twenty-five or thirty business and professional men compose an executive committee outlining a county policy under which homes, churches, and schools work harmoniously, while coöperating sub-committees and leaders of groups, all volunteers, are trained and directed by the County Secretary. To his aid he summons state officials, professors from the Michigan Agricultural College, the University of Michigan and other state institutions, as well as State and International Association experts.”

This work has been slowly established and built for permanency rather than spectacular results. One secretary, in answer to a criticism about the seeming failure to accomplish much during the first year of the work, said, “You can’t expect me to undo in one year what you and the devil have done in twenty-five years.” The state of Michigan, where this work seems to have reached its widest extension, averages in its various counties between 2,000 and 2,500 between the ages of twelve to sixteen and eighteen years. Owing to the widely separated localities of residence the plan of having the county as the unit of operation makes possible the assistance of an expert in boys’ work whose influence can be felt in every community in developing local leadership for boys, as well as helping a large number of the young fellows by his own personal presence. The results of this work are said to be amply repaying the effort.

A remarkably interesting feature of the work of



the Y. M. C. A. for the high school boys of the larger communities is the "Hi Y" club. It was my privilege to see the beginnings of the first building erected in the United States by the Association for this work. On a corner near the beautiful new high school building in the city of Lincoln, Nebraska, was an unsightly one-story lunch room and candy shop where many of the high school boys used to loaf between sessions and spend their father's money for chocolates and cigarettes,—and possibly engage in sports which civic and moral laws would classify as greater crimes. A liberal gift from the father of one of the boys—a wealthy automobile dealer in the city—made possible the buying of the lot on which the questionable rendezvous was located, and the building of an attractive brick building thereon as a Christian club house for the boys. Several years have elapsed since the beginning of this work, and now a recent report of the activities of this club during a three months' period shows that the special secretary in charge has held one hundred and forty-three interviews with boys and organized fifty-five boys in Bible classes, while the daily attendance of boys at the club rooms has averaged two hundred.

A variety of organizations of a community character are doing work for and with the children and the youth, but the highest results are not attained nor is the young person for whom they are organized fully satisfied if the effort is resolved into a mere passive treatment. Youth longs for self-expression and self-activity. What youth can do for

the community is fully as important—even more important, from the standpoint of the youth himself—than what all community agencies may do for him. The practical test of any program of assistance is found in what it has inspired the youth to do for others. A boy who printed and circulated an original poem on election day when the question of saloon license was up for decision in his village, felt that he had had an important part in the victory when the “dry” ticket won. A lesson of character value came out of the efforts of the school pupils in Decatur, Illinois, when they turned the waste paper of their city into a considerable sum of money for the benefit of their schools. Fifteen public and parochial schools coöperated, and nearly fifty-three tons of waste paper was collected, netting \$1,014. During the World War the Boy Scouts distinguished themselves for their activity and achievements in selling liberty bonds.

The same spirit which prompts the loyalty of the boy to the Church, the school and the nation may also be enlisted in his adherence to the town in which he lives if the community will show an appreciation of boy life and ideals. A great banking house in a capital city in the middle west, where Boy Scout troops are numerous, recently manifested its interest in boy life by a large display advertisement in a leading daily:

“Every Boy Scout in the city is invited to be present at our apple and doughnut party at 7:30 P. M., Wednesday, Nov. 9th, in our banking rooms. Your

troop is coming—see your scoutmaster. Be on time, don't miss the fun."

As an investment of sociability and friendly interest in the growing boy it is a fine testimony to the far-sightedness of the great banking house that sent out such an invitation. As a means of enlisting the boys in the interest of civic improvement a school superintendent in a western city has proposed a junior civic and industrial league which any boy in the fifth grade or above may join by committing to memory and accepting the following "Ephebic Oath" :

"We will never bring disgrace to this city by any act of dishonesty or cowardice. We will fight for the ideals and sacred things of the city both alone and with the many. We will revere and obey the city's laws and do our best to inculcate a like respect and reverence in those above us who are prone to annul or set them at naught. We will strive unceasingly to quicken the public sense of civic duty. Thus in all these ways will we transmit this city not only not less but greater, better, and more beautiful than it was transmitted to us."

As an inspiration to high ideals of citizenship and personal life perhaps no organizations have done more for boys and girls than the Boy Scouts and Camp Fire Girls. Though these clubs are often administered in connection with the church and Sunday school, they are primarily community organizations. Where there is no church to stand behind the endeavour there should be enough

Christian sentiment in the community to see that the leaders of the groups as well as the membership are true to the principles of the Scout law as to cleanness, reverence, and loyalty. The Boy Scouts are not afraid to be of service to the community, and when occasion offers they should have opportunity to contribute to the success of local enterprises. The city of Lincoln, Nebraska, a few years ago celebrated its fiftieth anniversary, and as an assistance to the police three hundred Boy Scouts were gathered from over the state to act as guides for the visitors, clear the streets for the parade, and form a volunteer force which was a pronounced help in every part of the celebration. In one county seat town in Iowa where the books were to be moved from the old court house to the new the Scouts were put in charge of the work and the valuable records of over seventy years were carried to their new vaults by long lines of Scout workers during a full day of arduous labour.

The young girl who desires to live a life worth while is cheered and inspired with the thought of the common duties of life, as well as the larger ideals of citizenship, by such organizations as the Camp Fire Girls, the Girl Scouts, and others of like character. It sometimes happens that the Church has been neglectful in providing a worthwhile program for its young people in this regard. Girls, as well as boys, want tasks equal to their abilities, or even beyond them. Jane Addams says:

“Of the dozens of young women who have begged



me to make a connection for them between their dreams of social usefulness and actual living, one of whom I had sent back to her clergyman, returned with this remark, 'His only suggestion was that I should be responsible every Sunday for fresh flowers upon the altar. I did that when I was fifteen and liked it then, but when you have come back from college and are twenty-two years old, it doesn't quite fit in with the vigorous efforts you have been told are necessary in order to make our social relations more Christian.' "

The community life furnishes something in the way of attractive work in the Woman's Clubs and societies with which even our small towns are so well supplied, but a very needy field is open in every small town for recreational and religious work with youth that ought to appeal to the college-trained young man or woman.

The renaissance of the play life which has come to our communities may be regulated and used by the leader of the youth to-day for the proper character effect, if he will but note the trend of the times. If the "little theater" movement seems to be inclining youth to a purposeless rendering of insipid and trashy plays, it is possible for the Christian leader of youth to turn the dramatic instinct toward the production of pageants and plays which shall have a more direct moral and intellectual trend. The author remembers with pleasure—and yet with memories of the hard work and anxious hours—the putting on of "The Courtship of Miles Standish" as a church entertainment which aroused the interest of the entire community.

Nearly fifty young people were employed in the cast and the occasion showed what might be accomplished in serious pageantry in a community way. Another occasion long to be remembered is a Fourth of July celebration which had as its distinctive feature a pageant illustrating the various epochs of American history. The author's personal experience in representing Hiawatha in the "Passing of the Red Man"—a most impressive scene—will remain forever imprinted on his memory. In several churches the author has used cantatas and pageants of religious subjects with good effect. The story of Bethlehem and the Christ-child acted by both "teen age" and adult pupils has given a religious flavour to the Christmas celebration often lacking in the old-time miscellaneous program, and added as well to its entertainment and educational value.

Closely associated with the pictorial representations of pageantry, we naturally call to mind the influence of the moving picture as a community asset. The absolute lack of censorship in the average town has given free rein to the moving picture men, and the moral forces of the community often feel quite at a loss to secure any reform in this popular public entertainment. Positive efforts, rather than a negative and condemnatory attitude, may often accomplish something in the way of an improvement in these local conditions. A few years ago a woman in one of our Iowa county seat towns was instrumental in organizing a "Better Film Movement" in her city. Representa-

tives of all the organizations of the city,—the Commercial Club, the Miners' Union, the Federation of Woman's Clubs, the railroad men, the ministerial association, as well as the W. C. T. U. and the Y. M. and Y. W. C. A. and other organizations,—a committee of about thirty-five in number—associated themselves to secure better movies for their city. They were not organized as a board of censors, but that they might recommend various films to the theaters of the city, with the promise of their personal endorsement and combined influence in securing the attention of the public to such films. Their recommendations were respected by some of the producers of the city, and correspondingly large audiences greeted the plays endorsed by the committee.

Many of the smaller towns have had their recreational life changed for the better by the erection of community houses which have done for the rural neighbourhood what the Y. M. and Y. W. C. A. buildings do for city youth. Some rural churches have effectively reinstated themselves as a community asset by the investment of money and energy in such an enterprise. Personally, this writer believes that such buildings are never better safeguarded from the introduction of harmful amusements than when under the control of the Christian Church.

Probably the most prominent opportunity for community betterment along recreational lines is afforded by the municipal playgrounds now so generally adopted throughout the country. Informa-



tion recently sent out by the Playground and Recreation Association of America tabulates reports from five hundred and five cities in the United States showing 4,600 playground and recreation centers, with nearly 20,000 paid directors and leaders of the work. Officers of the Juvenile Court have repeatedly testified that the playground is a wonderful deterrent to youthful crime. As an instance of what it means to youth to be without play opportunities it is worthy of note that in the "Hell's Kitchens" neighbourhood of New York City it was discovered that of one hundred and ninety-three delinquents before the Juvenile Court the play motive was the underlying cause of the misdemeanour in one hundred and eighty-four cases. An opportunity for legitimate play reduces crime as shown by a careful comparison of crime statistics in neighbourhoods with and without play facilities. The chief of police of San Francisco testifies that the establishment of recreation centers is an effective measure in suppressing the crime wave. The playground directors of Bay City, Michigan, say that they have made the discovery that summer activities on the playground have practically eliminated all swearing, cheating, and stealing among children.

The community that realizes that youth is its most priceless possession will not hesitate to give childhood its normal rights in the life of play. It is still a long way to perfect conditions in the matter of the community provision for play, and the exhortation sent out by the Municipal Affairs



Committee of Grand Rapids Board of Trade, is a suggestive appeal:

Plenty of room for dives and dens (glitter and glare of sin) ;

Plenty of room for prison pens (gather the criminals in),

Plenty of room for jails and courts (willing enough to pay),

But never a place for the lads to race—no, never a place to play!

Plenty of room for shops and stores (Mammon must have the best) ;

Plenty of room for running sores that rot in the city's breast!

Plenty of room for the lures that lead the hearts of our youth astray ;

But never a cent on a playground spent,—no never a place to play!

Plenty of room for schools and halls, plenty of room for art,

Plenty of room for teas and balls, platform, stage and mart,

Proud is the city, she finds a place for many a fad to-day ;

But she's more than blind if she fails to find a place for the boys to play!

Give them a chance for innocent sport, give them a chance for fun,

Better a playground plot than a court and a jail when the harm is done!

Give them a chance,—if you stint them now, to-morrow you'll have to pay

A larger bill for a darker ill ; so give them a place to play.

## XII

### YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE WORKING WORLD

**T**HE intimate relation between work and play is one of the most recent discoveries concerning the common activities of life. Much of the play of the child is a miniature representation of the manhood life of labour. Such play has an educational advantage as a preparation for the responsibilities of adult life. The wise parent will cherish these values, though at times he may be in perplexity concerning the relative importance of play and labour in the character development of his child. Many a father has wondered why his boy is so much more ready to play than to work.

The element of exhilaration which enters into the play life doubtless accounts in some degree for the greater ease with which even the most strenuous tasks are performed in the athletic games of the average youth. The biologist has a theory that play was an earlier art than labour, and that in play we follow with greater ease the long-used brain tracks of an early ancestry who were less accustomed to labour. Whether or not this sufficiently accounts for the indisposition to work which so

often seizes upon the adolescent youth, we cannot say; but this writer is convinced that the ecstasy of the play life may in large degree be associated with the life of labour if the individual finds his true place in the working world.

The problem of the unemployed is scarcely less pathetic than the problem of the mis-employed. The mistakes which many have made in the selection of a life-work have not only hindered their temporal prosperity, but in large degree have accomplished also their moral and spiritual injury. Evidences are abundant that these wrong choices in business and professional life are very frequent. An examination of the former occupations of twelve hundred clerks in the United States pension office some years ago showed that nearly four hundred had prepared themselves for the professions of law, medicine, and theology. The law graduates numbered two hundred and sixty-seven, the medical men one hundred, and the preachers twenty. Of teachers there were four hundred and fifty-seven, while over three hundred had formerly been associated with the printing and publishing business, either as writers, editors, or employees. Probably this array of misguided talent is not so sorrowful a testimony to the folly of laying sky-scraper foundations for bungalow lives as an instance of which Dr. Marden tells, of three university men who were found working on a sheep farm in Australia. One was from Oxford, one from Cambridge, and another from a German university; all prepared to be leaders of men, but now are herders of sheep.

A further striking proof of the presence of the misfit in life's activities is given by Mrs. Blackford and Arthur Newcomb, joint authors of a comprehensive volume on character analysis. They state:

“In our experience, covering years of careful investigation and the examination of many thousands of individuals, we have seen so much of the tragedy of the misfit that it seems at times almost universal. Records of one thousand persons, taken at random from our files, show that seven hundred and sixty-three or seventy-six and three-tenths per cent felt that they were in the wrong vocations. Of these four hundred and fourteen were thirty-five years old or older.”

The realization that so large a proportion of the race are labouring under a handicap which cannot but affect their individual happiness and the quality of their service to humanity, would seem to call for decided action on the part of all the agencies that have to do with a young person's start in life. The home should especially be interested in securing a favourable vocation for the child. Yet, how often is it the case that a parent has assumed to predetermine a vocation for his child, no matter what his natural gifts may be. Blackford and Newcomb give an instance of a wealthy farmer who made this mistake. He was determined that his daughter should become a musician, while his son must be prepared for business. He was deaf to the pleas of his children, whose tastes were exactly opposite. The daughter had business ability and no natural musical talent,—the son had



musical tastes but no business skill. The daughter made a failure of her musical career, though her father spent thousands of dollars upon her training,—giving her the best advantages both at home and abroad. The son was a failure in business, and embezzled several thousand dollars from his employer that he might go to Europe to study music. Thus two lives were ruined by an obdurate parent who failed to respect the individuality of his children or regard the insistent urge of natural talent.

It will not be supposed that a sudden fancy—a mere whim—on the part of youth shall be the determining factor in the choice of an occupation. Benjamin Franklin's early desire was to go to sea, but his father seems to have been wise enough to turn his thought toward other occupations that he might find his natural place in the world of labour. Franklin says of his father: "He sometimes took me to walk with him that I might see joiners, turners, bricklayers, braziers, etc., at their work, that he might observe my inclination, and endeavour to fix it on some trade or other on land." The father, after a trial of his son "at the cutler's trade" determined to make the boy a printer, "for," says Franklin, "from a child I was fond of reading, and all the little money that came into my hands was ever laid out in books."

If the elder Franklin had some difficulty in finding the trade which was adapted to his son in those earlier days of simplicity, what must be the perplexity of both parent and child to-day when trades

and professions are so much more complex and exacting. In manual industry men do not do a whole job to-day, but simply handle part of the completed product. In the professions there is such a tendency to specialize that the field of labour and study has become intensive rather than extensive. The smaller ideals of convenience and economic gain must give way to the higher laws of adaptation and service. Youth in his search for a fitting occupation must have the assistance of those with a more expert knowledge of the wider fields of service.

Following the natural desire of youth for a personal income, the average boy will try his hand at various occupations, probably only as temporary expedients. Some of these are really helpful in giving the lad business experience and training him in thrift and dependability. The wise parent will however consider moral values first, and if these promising jobs are associated with questionable environment it were better that the boy should earn less than squander character-wealth for temporary gain. Many young people, pushed by family poverty, or personal aspiration, are assisting in commercial pursuits or apprenticed to manual labour before the days of childhood are fairly over. Large numbers of these will be robbed of the natural rights of youth, and not a few will be forever doomed to spiritual poverty.

Educational leaders encourage the youth to stay in school, and thus fit themselves for the larger places in life with greater earning capacity. In

recent years our public schools and colleges have been giving considerable attention to the matter of vocational training. The assistance thus given, supplemented by the intelligent coöperation of the home, affords the youth of the present day a more certain method of finding his life-work than former years could furnish. A number of the large cities of the United States maintain high schools for the teaching of the trades and professions. Massachusetts seems to have been a pioneer in this kind of educational work, and for more than ten years has been carrying on trade schools at state expense. Even the art of home keeping will evidently soon be generally taught that high school girls may be fitted for the womanly duties of the home circle. A notable example of a high school which claims to be a pioneer in this regard is at University Place, Nebraska, where the girls of the high school have charge of a model home which is owned and operated under the direction of the board of education.

It is evident that even in the public schools of the smaller localities the pupils are beginning to think of their future places of service in the world. This author has submitted a number of questionnaires to school students in various towns. The results of one of these lists taken in a consolidated school in a small town in Iowa is perhaps a typical presentation of the occupational preferences of the pupils down to the sixth grade: Of the one hundred and thirty-two pupils questioned thirty-four did not answer the question, twenty others were not decided, and the majority—seventy-eight—were di-



vided as follows: Teacher, twenty; music teacher, three; farmer, nineteen; stenographer, seven; engineering, seven; bookkeeper, six; clerk, three; mechanic, two; doctor, two; nurse, two; oratory and expression, lawyer, banker, preacher, sailor, athletic coach, author, each one.

Prof. Jesse B. Davis presents a very interesting summary of a vocational census of a certain high school, where he made a study of five hundred and thirty-one boys. Of the total number, two hundred and forty had decided on some vocation. There were two hundred and ninety-one who had not arrived at any decision; though one hundred and ninety-four had tried to do so; but ninety-seven boys had made no effort at all. Of the two hundred and ninety-one, two hundred and thirty-five said they would like to have advice upon the subject; leaving fifty-six who were apparently indifferent to the question.

An investigation of the influences which had assisted in the decision of the two hundred and forty showed the following results: Parents had practically decided in one hundred and five instances; teachers had influenced twenty-six; companions were the deciding factor with thirty-three; fifty-nine had chosen because some relative or friend had made the occupation attractive to them; leaving only twenty-three who had arrived at their own conclusions. As to the pupils' knowledge of the chosen vocations, it was found that forty-nine had worked during vacations or at other times at the selected occupations, thirty-four knew of the



work through the connection of relatives with it, thirty-six had made some study of the vocation, while one hundred and twenty-three had no real knowledge of their chosen work. The reasons for the expressed choices were as follows: One, "for service;" nineteen, "for money;" eighty-five, "preferred" or "liked" the work; thirty-nine felt themselves "better fitted for it;" nineteen wished to do the same work as their parents; seventy-seven had no other purpose than to make a living.

These figures indicate home influence as the largest factor in the decision of a vocation, the next largest the influence of associates, while direct school influence affected a much smaller number. No doubt there are many who go through our public schools and even into a college course with no well grounded idea concerning their life-work. A president of one of the smaller colleges tells of a conference with some students several years ago: "I went to Iowa to speak at an excellent old college about trade schools in Germany. At the close of the address a half dozen young men—seniors—asked to have interviews. We talked until after 2 A. M. about their life problems. These young men had spent sixteen years in school with no more idea what service they were to render to society than the day they entered school."

It should not be a cause for wonder that our schools have had so little effect upon the choice of a vocation, or that the individual has been allowed to drift into any career that suited his convenience,—for the first beginnings of the organized

efforts for vocational guidance in this country only date back about a dozen years. It was at first a business proposition and not connected with the schools. The first national conference on vocational guidance was held in Boston in 1910. Other national gatherings followed; and the subject was later taken up by the schools. Municipalities have also taken action, and several cities now have vocational directors whose expert advice is at the disposal of their citizens. Where the vocational director has had the full personal coöperation of the individual good results have followed in the placing of young people in situations appropriate to the need of the applicant. In compliance with the child labour regulations of the city and state the vocational expert has been able to correct some abuses which might otherwise have gone undiscovered.

The vocational counselor in Boston investigated the case of a fourteen-year-old boy who applied for a city hall license. It was found that he got up at 3:30 every morning and going to the newspaper office got heavy bundles of papers to deliver to news-stands to older boys, and after five hours of this work, went to school,—often without breakfast. The boy was puny and undersized and had twice been in the hospital. He lived in a crowded tenement district. The father, a man forty-two years of age, and able to work,—but who said he was “weak”—was called before the authorities and instructed to give the boy better treatment and limit his working hours. With the increased hours

of sleep the boy's health and school work were both much improved.

If there were no other reasons than merely humanitarian ones why Christian workers who deal with the young should be interested in the labour conditions of youth, these would be sufficient to arouse our deepest sympathy. Many of the disheartening conditions which labour investigations have revealed concerning the toil of women and children have been corrected by aroused public sentiment and restrictive laws, but there is still enough in the wrongs inflicted upon the weaker ones in the working world to stir the heart of the compassionate and engage the serious attention of the reformer.

The relation of an occupation to moral and religious life should command the attention of those interested in youth's spiritual welfare. This was especially brought to my thought by a personal conversation with a business man a few years ago. He was a pleasant gentleman, whose wife was a lovely character, and they had one child—a bright little Buster-Brown boy of four years. I urged him to consecrate his life to Christ, speaking especially of his duty to his wife and child. He said that his business was such that he could not be a Christian. He was a cigarmaker, and while on the road taking orders for his house, he found that his best buyers in many cities were the saloon-keepers. The places where he was forced to go were a constant menace to morals and the associations of his trade were such that even unwillingly



he was often forced to mingle with an underworld which was disagreeable to his better nature. He confessed that his early home training was far different from his present life. This brief glimpse of a man's life story indicates at least that if some one in the earlier years could have turned a certain boy's feet toward a different vocational path there might have been a changed trend to the whole life.

It has, however, been too largely assumed that there are only certain vocations in which moral integrity is absolutely required. Some years ago a prominent man in American public life, in writing of the superior qualifications necessary for the minister to possess, said:

"You do not have to *be* anything in particular to be a lawyer. I have been a lawyer, and I know. You do not have to *be* anything in particular, except a kind-hearted man, perhaps, to be a physician; you do not have to *be* anything or undergo any strong spiritual change, in order to be a merchant. The only profession which consists in *being* something is the ministry of our Lord and Saviour—and it does not consist of anything else."

There is of course truth in such a statement, but there has probably never been a time when the standards of moral living as a requisite for success in every walk in life were higher than now. I frequently receive letters from employment agencies and business firms who have some one in view for a position, concerning whom they ask a detailed statement. Such questionnaires, along with questions concerning training and ability, invari-



ably ask concerning the moral life of the applicant: "Are his habits sober and temperate?" "Does he use tobacco,—smoke cigarettes?" "Does he play cards for money, or engage in other forms of gambling?" The personal question blanks furnished to the applicant for positions are provided with some similar inquiries.

Young women as well as young men are subject to these character tests; indeed there are some places in life where their character seems to be an especially important asset. Certain nurse training schools require of their students the acceptance of the Florence Nightingale pledge, which reads as follows:

"I solemnly pledge myself before God, and in the presence of this assembly, to pass my life in purity and to practice my profession faithfully. I will abstain from whatever is mischievous, and I will not take or knowingly administer any harmful drug. I will do all in my power to maintain and elevate the standard of my profession, and will hold in confidence any personal matters coming to my knowledge in the practice of my calling. With loyalty will I endeavour to aid the physician in his work and devote myself to the welfare of those committed to my care."

The integrity of faithful employees has often proved the safeguard of business success. A number of years ago a young lady stenographer in the general office of a great railroad system was offered \$5,000 by business rivals to betray the contents of correspondence which had passed

through her hands. She refused to take the bribe and gave evidence which brought the conspirators into court to answer for their misdeeds.

The day has passed when the Church can think of the common occupations of life as wholly divorced from the religious ideal. In all walks of the commercial world are to be found those who have for years administered their business in accordance with high Christian principles, and who conscientiously devote some definite part of their financial proceeds to the carrying on of philanthropic and Christian work. Present day youth must be inspired with the thought that the selecting of an occupation and the filling of even a humble place in the busy life of labour is a religious task of no small importance. If the Church is to have the necessary means for the carrying out of a social and religious program which is constantly increasing in magnitude, its future members must be taught that there is a vital relation between a Christian's use of the material things of life and his interest in the enlarging Kingdom of Christ.

The recent awakening of the Church to the possibility of directing the life occupations of the young has resulted in the organization of "life service" departments by our general church boards of Sunday schools and young people's societies. The enrollment of young people for ministerial, missionary, and miscellaneous Christian service has become a feature of young people's conventions and institutes through the country, and these names are filed at the central offices of these so-

cieties. By correspondence and personal contact the young people are kept in mind, so that educational preparation may be made, and the young Christian furnished every opportunity for the carrying out of his life decision.

In some degree this plan for the enlistment of young life in the service of the Church was probably due to the concern of church authorities over the alarming decline in the number of candidates for the ministry and the increasing need of missionary fields. One great denomination reports that it has 30,000 churches with only 17,000 ministers. Every year five per cent of the ministers are lost out by death or retirement; and 1,700 new recruits are needed to fill up the ranks and provide for the expansion of the work. The present rate of supply for this work is only three and one-half per cent, or five hundred and sixty-five. The output of the theological schools, as reported by several denominations, has for the past few years been discouragingly small. Most recent advices, however, indicate that there is an increased number of ministerial students, and the returns from the newly organized life service endeavours seem to point to a much better condition regarding ministerial help.

It is interesting to note that the larger contributions to the ministerial force of the Church come from the country districts, while the city churches have done little to furnish these heralds of the cross. At a great Methodist convention held at Harrisburg, Pa., it was discovered by a

census of those present that nine-tenths of the leaders of the Church in Pennsylvania were born and raised in the rural sections. One small church in Rockland Township, Venango County, twelve miles from any worth-while town, has given twenty-three men to the ministry. The rural neighbourhood where the church is located includes several other small churches, and from the group there has come one minister a year on an average for sixty-five years.

There is little doubt that the spirit of the homes which have hitherto made up the constituency of the churches in these country districts has had much to do with this fine result. Childhood impressions concerning the ministry as a life-work have greatly influenced youth's after decision. The early age at which the first movings toward the ministry have come to those who afterward entered the calling are indicated by the returns from a questionnaire—already mentioned in these pages,—from which I secured data from one hundred and seventy-five Methodist ministers in a western conference. So far as the figures are exactly given the lists show that one hundred and forty-two of these date their first leadings toward the ministry at a period below the age of twenty; only twenty-two placing these impressions above that age; and the average time of all being fifteen and six-tenths years. Quite a number of them say that these first impressions came with the earliest childhood, the ages of five, six, and seven years being several times mentioned. One says, "I never had any-



thing else seriously in mind. I always felt that I must preach the Gospel." The tabulation of these life experiences as well as the vivid personal experience of the writer is confirmatory of the belief that many a lad has grown up with the ministry as a life-work in the background of his thought in a similar way to the experience of Raymond H. Huse, in his little book, "The Soul of a Child" :

"We know a lad who, from the first time he attended church, when he was four years old, never thought of himself in the glorious days of manhood yet to be as anything but a Christian minister. It was not the whim of the child who wants to be a soldier one day and a storekeeper the next. It was a deep feeling, a settled certainty that never left him. When he played with other children and—after the manner of children—posed as 'butcher, baker, and Indian chief,' underneath it all was the feeling, 'I am just playing this; I am really to be a minister.'"

The Christian home as well as the agencies of the organized Church should supplement the movings of the Divine Spirit in the life of the young in the effort to impress upon them the desirability of finding a place in life where Christian service can be rendered in a perfectly natural way. Not only are the fields of ministerial and missionary service open before the youth to-day, but the wider activities of the Church are demanding and will soon require in increasing numbers pastors' assistants, directors of religious education and recreational life, and other forms of service for which

both young men and women are now preparing in our Christian schools.

It is not our purpose to indicate that every Christian young person should find his field of labour within the Church. Every occupation will afford an opportunity for service to God and man if the consecration of life to the Divine plan is recognized as the basis of our labour. And the joy of labour will return when in every task we have the fellowship of the Carpenter of Galilee suggested in Charles M. Sheldon's poem:

“ If I could hold within my hand  
The hammer Jesus swung,  
Not all the gold in all the land,  
Nor jewels countless as the sand  
All in the balance hung,  
Could weigh against the precious thing  
Round which His fingers once did cling.

“ If I could have the table He  
Once made in Nazareth,  
Not all the pearls in all the sea  
For crowns of kings and kings to be  
So long as men have breath,  
Could buy that thing of wood He made,  
The Lord of Lords who learned a trade.

“ But still that hammer yet is shown  
By honest hands that toil;  
And at that table men sat down  
And all made equal by a crown  
No gold or pearls can soil;  
The shop of Nazareth was bare  
But brotherhood was builded there.”

### XIII

## THE HEROES OF YOUTH

**T**HE spirit of hero-worship is found both in patriotism and Christianity. The power of a great ideal, illustrated in the life of a national leader, has made possible the most daring revolutions and the severest struggles for liberty. The necessity of a national hero as an inspiration for a downtrodden people was brought forcibly to my thought by a teacher from one of our government schools in the Philippines who was on a furlough in this country a few years ago. She related how the life and sacrifices of José Rizal, an educated and patriotic leader of the Filipinos, was being used by the teachers as the ideal champion of liberty, to inspire them with a love for their native land. The need of the people—so long oppressed—was felt to be a national hero whose self-sacrificing spirit might inspire them to high ideals of citizenship. Concerning the influence of this devotion to their national hero, Bishop Stuntz, of the Methodist Church, writes from his long experience in the Philippines: “No name is so popular in the Philippines to-day as that of José Rizal. His picture is on the walls of tens of thousands of homes, from the best houses of Filipinos in Manila and the

large provincial cities, to the humblest house of the labourer in remote villages.”

The recognition of the value of the hero's example and the acceptance of this material by these educators as a basis on which to build an ideal citizenship, is a method worthy of imitation by those who seek to lead our youth into the paths of correct moral living. Not only the patriotic ideals of youth but their ethical standards as well are shaped by their life heroes.

The value of hero worship to youth has more frequently been appreciated by the world than by the Church. Boys and girls' books are enhanced considerably in value by being published in series with the same central characters,—thus giving youth the opportunity to follow through their various experiences these fictitious characters who become real heroes to their ardent admirers. The popularity of the motion picture is due in some degree to the prominence given to certain “stars” whose names and pictures become familiar to youth, and whose clothes and mannerisms are copied by the young people who witness the plays. The melancholy moral downfall of some of these screen idols brings a sense of grief to those who have been their devotees. The same spirit of hero worship is manifest in the devotion of the youth to a much admired athletic champion. The influence of such a hero is indicated in the appeal of Mike Murphy, once coach of the University of Pennsylvania, to his football team when it seemed as though they would lose the game. In the interim between



halves he said, "If you can't win for the sake of Pennsylvania, if you can't win for the sake of your mothers and sweethearts, go into the game and win for me!" In response to this challenge they won the game.

It is sometimes the case that in this hero-worshipping era of life the parent loses patience with his child's fancy for these strange lovers. A sort of unwitting jealousy concerning the child's outside friends manifests itself, and impatient remarks about the youth's admiration for screen and story heroes are frequently made. In many localities which are bereft of great characters as life patterns it is possible that the hero of the story or the picture—especially if these may be of the better class—afford more excellent life examples to the youth than the flesh-and-blood folk among whom he lives.

The followers of Jehovah in past ages recognized the value of the religious hero more keenly than has the Church of the Christian era. The reverence of the ancient Jew for Moses and the line of patriotic leaders who followed him, gave to their descendants—and indeed to the whole Christian world as well—a picture gallery of heroes whose character and doings are an unfailing stimulus to the religious life. Modern theologians have been inclined to remove the personal element from religious ideals and substitute formulas and written creeds instead.

The value of the study of the important characters of history from the standpoint of the heroic

is a recent discovery of the Church. For many years the Church's teaching of youth, so far as character study was concerned, was along the line of saintliness, rather than heroism. Ask any vigorous and alert young American what a saint is and he will tell you that it is some one especially distinguished for goodness. A picture of a pale, fair countenanced man, with a most gentle expression of face, and possibly with a halo around his head, will immediately appear to his imagination. Ask him what a hero is, and he will tell you that it is one who has done valiant deeds. The mental picture before him will be a knight in armour or a soldier in the modern equipment of warfare. There you have it—the saint as a synonym for goodness (of the negative sort), the hero as a representative of action. Too long we have distinguished between *being* and *doing*. The young person has sought out his heroes among the folks of action, rather than accept as his ideal the character that is merely supinely good. Happily for the youth of the present day, the Biblical material of our teaching is now presented from the standpoint of the heroic. We teach the junior child stories of the heroes of the Old and New Testaments, and in all the graded lessons emphasize the fearlessness of the prophets, the courage of the disciples, the unafraid character of Paul, and the stalwart manliness of the Master of men.

Wherever manliness and heroism are found exemplified in human lives these lives are especially potent as a force in drawing youth toward their

ideals. For the sake of the salvation of youth, if nothing else, the Church of the present day must get back to such Christian ideals as can be concreted in personal life. John Wanamaker, known as a great business man and a great Christian, tells how the words of a certain young business man, when he was a "big, inexperienced, and irreligious country boy," led him to become a Christian. He had gone to church on the invitation of a certain salesman, and the minister who conducted the meeting asked the laymen present to testify concerning their Christian faith. One testimony given that night impressed young Wanamaker greatly; it was that of a young business man who said that he had been a Christian for only two years, but in that time he had discovered that religion had made him a better business man; that he had met with greater financial success, had made more money and made it easier by operating his business according to Christian principles than in the other days when he did not follow Christ. After the meeting was dismissed the boy remained behind, and though no one was left but the minister and the janitor, he went up to the old minister and gave him his hand and told him that he had given his heart to Christ and had decided to begin the Christian life. The minister spoke kindly to the country boy, saying, "God bless you, my boy." "And," says Mr. Wanamaker, "that was all there was of it, and I have been a Christian ever since." The conversion of the merchant prince of Philadelphia, whose character is known as widely as his business suc-



cess, was really the fruitage of a sudden response to an ideal which he had found incarnated in the business man who gave a faithful testimony for Christ.

The opportunity to be a hero to youth is a privilege which should be coveted by every follower of the Master. Is it too much to say with Dr. Slaughter that "the chief value of great men is to fertilize the imagination of adolescents"? Certainly we may believe that, as another has said, "Every man is some boy's hero." Whatever of hero worship there is in the days of childhood is usually wrapped up in the child's implicit confidence in the parent. Some fathers very happily sustain this relation to their sons up to their older years. Many men who seek to retain the devotion of their own sons will the better order their lives in response to such a demand than in obedience to any other law, either human or Divine. It is quite possible that the parent learns more from the child concerning the ethical standards of life than does the child from the parent. A father who wrote a letter to his eighteen-year-old son shortly after his enlistment in the World War uttered some well chosen sentiments concerning the relation between parent and child:

"Some day, I hope, you will have a son of your own. As you watch him on the day of his birth, as his tiny form lies by his mother's side, a gust of tenderness will come to your aching heart and fill you with a sense of sobering responsibility and obligation. There will come with this a wave of parental



love that will expand your soul and reveal wells of unsuspected emotional depth. Coincident with this will come a great surging ambition. What sacrifices will you not be willing to make, provided only your vicarious hardships ease the path for your offspring and lead him to places of distinction and honour."

A lack of appreciation of the youth may break the closeness of association between parent and child, and the youth be forced to turn to strangers for inspiration and help. The father of James Whitcomb Riley, so the Hoosier poet says, had no appreciation of his son's literary talent. He was a lawyer. The poet says, "Being a lawyer, my father believed in facts. He had little use for a boy who could not learn arithmetic. There were others of the same opinion. My schoolmates had an aptitude for figures and stood well in their classes. The result was, half the town pitied me. Again and again I was told I would have to be supported by the family." A neighbour woman who assisted her own boy and young Riley to good books was the first to see in "the strange young man" the germ of literary ability. The relations of the young fellow with his father were somewhat strained for a number of years; but later in life they came into a close fellowship again. After the poet had attained some eminence and also some wealth, the old man came to see him. The son took him to the clothing store and furnished him with a new outfit and entertained him at the best hotel. After dinner they walked about the city together and the father was proudly introduced by

Riley to his friends. The son said, "I tell you that did me good. It was a proud day in my life. Neither of us recalled the misunderstandings of long ago."

Among the most potent influences for good in the life of the youth outside the family circle, the teacher easily holds an outstanding place. The character of the teacher is well presented by Dr. George H. Betts in one of his recent books, in which he recognizes three kinds of teachers; the first, a long remembered class, not because of affection, but because of certain antagonisms and resentments for their unjust onslaughts that can only be forgiven after many years have passed by; another class who are remembered because of real affection and gratitude as long as memory lasts. "Between these two," he says, "is a third and larger group; those who are forgotten, because they failed to stamp a lasting impression on their pupils." In connection with the memory of the pleasant relation between pupil and teacher, he tells of a venerable old man who approached his desk with an ancient text-book in grammar across whose fly leaf was written the familiar signature of Grover Cleveland. The old man said, "I have been a teacher. In one of my first schools I had Grover Cleveland as a pupil, to whom I loaned my text-book in grammar, as he had come without one. Years passed, and one day I was among the many hundreds passing in line to grasp the President's hand at a public reception. I carried this book with me, and when it came my turn to meet the

President, I presented this volume and said, 'Mr. President, do you recognize this book, and do you remember me?' In an instant the light of recognition flashed in his eyes. Calling me by name, he grasped my hand and held it while the crowd waited and while he recalled the old times and thanked me for what I had meant to him when I was his teacher. Then he took the old book and autographed it for me."

The personality of the teacher, whether in the day school or in the religious assembly, is a vital asset in his resources. Multitudes of young people who have grown up in our Sunday schools have not as clear an idea of the Bible or theological formulas as they have of the character of the teachers who taught the lessons. The deepest impressions for good have been made upon human lives by many teachers who had poor equipment for studying or imparting their lessons, and whose knowledge of pedagogical laws was quite negligible. But by their devotion and earnest efforts they succeeded in moulding some human lives into a resemblance to the Divine. It is no argument against our improved methods of religious training that this is so, but it is a testimony to the power of the Eternal Spirit which worketh wheresoever hearts are open to His power.

A newspaper clipping which lies before me as I write records the death of an octogenarian at the home of her daughter in San José, California. Mrs. M. E. Roberts, the subject of the sketch, was the widow of a minister living at Lincoln, Ne-

braska, who for more than a generation kept up a Sunday-school class of young men in the leading Methodist Church of her home city, many of whom were students of the high school or university. Her home was ever the center of student activities as well. The finest tribute in her biography is the line of the newspaper paragrapher which says, "it is believed that she influenced the lives of more young men than any other woman in Lincoln." Probably more widely known is the work of another Christian woman, Mrs. Charlotte F. Wilder, of Manhattan, Kansas, for over forty-five years a teacher of a remarkable Bible class of young men which has run through the years from one hundred to one hundred and fifty in attendance. During the years over three thousand young men students of the State Agricultural College have had the benefit of her class. One hundred of these are in the ministry, and the former students of the class are found in all the continents of the eastern and western world.

When such opportunities for character creation are within the reach of the one who will devote himself to the youth of his generation, it is little wonder that teachers in our church schools are taking advantage of the best equipment for their work which they can find. The denominational boards of our leading churches are furnishing very fitting courses in child study and practical teaching methods for those who are willing to be leaders in such inspiring work. Besides the local training classes which are being organized each year in



increasing numbers, and the special correspondence courses offered, our leading colleges and universities are creating departments of religious education where those who seek to prepare themselves for the work in a most thorough manner are given the chance for an educational equipment adequate to their task.

The wisdom of preparing leaders for the future day is apparent from the success which has attended such efforts; it is also indicated by the need which is still manifest as we examine the present teaching force of our church schools. In many an outlying community these schools have a very poorly equipped leadership. In the larger centers of population much better conditions obtain. The educational training of one hundred teachers in a typical small city is thus tabulated by Inter-Church statistics: Eight had college training, while six were graduates; thirty-one were high school graduates, and sixteen had graduated from the grades, while eight did not finish; and the remainder were listed among those who had had some training in high school or business college. Many of these had evidently begun their work as Sunday-school teachers on small intellectual preparation, for an effort to tabulate the ages at which they commenced teaching in the church school showed the following results: One at the age of thirteen; twelve at the age of fourteen; eighteen at the age of fifteen; thirty-one at the age of sixteen; thirty-two at the age of seventeen; and the balance did not report on the question.

It is not supposed, of course, that mere intellectual qualifications will fit one for teaching and youthful leadership. A heart attitude which is unfavourable will negative all mental preparation. G. Stanley Hall says:

“If there is such a thing as a ‘call to teach,’ it consists in loving children, and with love go insight, the power to serve, and the desire to help each child to the maximum development of body and soul of which he is capable. . . . Those who do not love children have no right to teach.”

The Church has reason to be grateful for the ministry who have realized the power of the teaching function. Personally it seems clear to the writer that what the Church needs to-day is a teaching ministry which shall abandon the mannerisms of Websterian oratory and in straightforward words bear the commanding message of truth which the Master committed to His men when His “great commission” reached their hearts in Galilee of old. He sent them forth with a message which was summed up in the words—“teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you.” Since He Himself was known to His disciples as the Great Teacher, they—His pupils—could aspire to no higher honour than to be His successors in the task.

Through the years that have intervened since the first disciples went forth upon their teaching mission those who have followed them in the way have brought their inspiration to the listening

multitudes from the smallest crossroads chapel to the cathedral on the avenue, and in turn have inspired others to take up the work of the evangel as well. Of one hundred and fifty-four ministers from whom I received replies to the question, "What person or agency assisted you in your decision to devote your life to the ministry?" eighty-four included the pastor as a deciding factor. The width of the pastor's influence in this particular is revealed in some measure by the answers of the same ministers to the question, "How many can you count who through your influence have entered ministerial or missionary work?" The returns from one hundred of these pastors show a total of four hundred and thirteen cases in which they materially assisted young men to make a decision of this sort. Other indefinite answers, such as "several," "some," "a number," would have swelled the total result to much greater proportions if accurate figures had been given.

Even in the smallest communities where but few come under his influence the minister is the recognized inspirer of the ideals of the young; while in the wider circles of city and college life the results are probably more widely felt, but less accurately known. No doubt many a young person who never by his spoken word indicated the fact,—desiring to make a life that should be more than mere existence,—has looked to the pastor for his character ideals and life inspiration.

The highest service of youth's hero will often be to aid him in discovering himself, that out of the

seemingly crude material of his own life he may attain the destiny of which he has often dreamed. Such heroes and heroines are aptly described by Harriet Beecher Stowe:

“There be soul artists who go through this world, looking among their fellows with reverence, as one looks among the dust and rubbish of old shops for hidden works of Titian and Leonardo, and finding them, however cracked or torn or painted over with the tawdry daubs of pretenders, immediately set themselves to clean and restore. Such be God’s real priests, whose ordination and anointing are from the Holy Spirit; and he who hath not this enthusiasm is not ordained of God, though whole synods of bishops laid hands upon him.”

A minister, sitting in his study in Chicago, preparing his sermon, looked up to greet his nephew, a young student, who stood by his desk. In the midst of the conversation which followed the boy said, “Uncle, what are you going to preach on next Sunday?” The minister answered, “I am planning to speak on the text, ‘To this end was I born, and for this purpose came I into the world.’” “Well, uncle,” said the young fellow, “I have always wondered why I ever came into the world,—what I was ever born for.” Within a week after that came the great fire at the Iroquois theater, and this same manly young fellow was heroically working in the gallery carrying one after another to the windows and passing them to rescuers outside, where they might be safe from the panic and terror which reigned within. When, exhausted



and overcome, they rescued him from the burning building, they took him to his uncle's home. The physicians said he had breathed flame and smoke until there was no hope for him. His minister-uncle, none other than the late Dr. Gunsaulus, came to bring him comfort, though his heart was full of sorrow at his nephew's condition. The sufferer opened his eyes in a moment of passing consciousness and seeing his uncle by his side, said with exultant voice, "O uncle, now I know! Now I know!"

## XIV

### REACHING THE GOAL

EVERY generation lives for its successors. From the very beginning of time it has been true that life can only be lived by the bounteous legacies which have come from the accumulated resources of one's ancestors. Among civilized men this truth finds its constant illustration in the care of the parent for the child. It is doubtful if the childless individual, bereft of this inspiration, can ever follow as completely the self-sacrificing ideal of the One who "freely gave Himself up for us all," as can the toiling parent who seeks to smooth the rugged way of life for the little feet that trudge behind.

This principle is well recognized in family life; but men have been slow to apply it to other institutions. It is only in the most recent times that the school has recognized that the pupil is the prime factor in education. For many years the process of education was a thing similar to a ready-made suit; it fitted the individual of regulation size, but those who were too broad or too long, or too fat, or too lean, were condemned to wear sackcloth all their lives because our intellectual tailors could only cut according to a regulation pattern. The adapta-

tion of the course of instruction to the pupil's need is a modern discovery in the field of learning which will enable the coming generation to be clothed in a mental equipment of genius and power. It enables the school to exist for its learners rather than for its learning.

In a large sense the Church of Christ needs to grasp this same truth. The Church of to-day must live for the Church of to-morrow. The family,—an ideal organization from which other human institutions can well be patterned,—has learned this. The nation,—especially where the democratic spirit of the common people has prevailed,—has also learned it. The school,—the nearest to the Church in calling and purpose—has come to this knowledge. The Church,—with its earnest consecration to lofty ideals,—is but beginning to learn that the very preservation of its own life depends upon its living for the Church that is to be.

If the application of this truth to religious endeavour seems to be at all strange or unusual it is only necessary that we should remind ourselves that all human experience is vocal with the testimony that both nations and individuals which hold the places of greatest responsibility—while regarding with due care the past and its lessons—cannot but give keen and careful attention to the path which future generations are to travel. Some poet has given us a significant illustration of this truth:

“ An old man going a lone highway,  
Came at the evening, cold and gray,  
To a chasm vast and deep and wide,

The old man crossed in the twilight dim,  
The sullen stream had no fear for him;  
And he turned when safe on the other side,  
And built a bridge to span the tide.

“ ‘ Old man,’ said a fellow pilgrim near,  
‘ You’re wasting your strength with building here,  
Your journey will end with the ending day,  
You never again will pass this way,  
You’ve crossed the chasm deep and wide,  
Why build you this bridge at eventide? ’

“ The builder lifted his old gray head—  
‘ Good friend, in the path I have come,’ he said,  
‘ There followeth after me to-day  
A youth whose feet must pass this way.  
The chasm that has been as naught to me,  
To the fair-haired youth may a pitfall be,  
He too must cross in the twilight dim;  
Good friend, I am building this bridge for him.’ ”

For the accomplishment of the good purposes which the Church desires to carry out for its children, some readjustment of manners and methods will doubtless be necessary. These changes in the Church’s program are gradually taking place. Among the aged some regrets are heard that these newer times are vibrant with the voices of strange prophets, and often a desire is expressed that “ the good old times ” might come back again. The Church will have to struggle with this spirit of retrogression in the guise of piety. But if it keeps pace with youth it must ever face forward.

One of the striking changes which has come to the modern Church is its changing vocabulary.



Whether for good or for ill, certain set theological expressions seem to have nearly passed away, and are seldom on the lips of laymen, and almost eliminated from the modern sermon. New phrases and new plans have taken the place of those which have departed. Even in great revival campaigns where earnest efforts are made to be true to orthodox standards of teaching, the converts are called "trail hitters," and applause instead of "amens" is the accompaniment of the evangelist's preaching.

No doubt the set theological formulas of other days have been confusing in a great degree to the youth who has tried to apply them to practical Christianity. Dr. Borden P. Bowne, in his "Studies in Christianity," says:

"My professional life has largely been spent in contact with thoughtful young men and women; and I have frequently observed an uneasy feeling on their part that the traditional phrases of religious speech do not set forth with unstrained naturalness and transparent sincerity the facts of their religious life. Often they have formed a conception of what the religious life should be by reflection on the customary and inherited phrases and thus they have been led to entertain unwarranted expectations. Then the failure to realize them has led to an uncomfortable sense of artificiality and unreality in all religious experience."

Guided by an intelligent and sympathetic teacher the thoughtful youth may be led to see that the familiar figures of speech used in teaching religion

are not to be literalized to the destruction of practical religious experience. In the light of our fuller knowledge of mental states, a readjustment of religious phraseology will be possible on the part of the leader of the young which will help remove Christian experience from an archaic realm to the area of practical life. The nature of religion and its intimate connection with the finer side of existence will, however, prevent the elimination of the figurative and poetic in the teaching of spiritual truths. The wise teacher will of course introduce only the simile and comparative element in accordance with the interest and knowledge of his pupils.

The adaptability of the newer methods of religious education to the need of youth is abundantly evidenced, but there are those with small experience and short-sighted vision who sometimes arise to make a protest against any deviation from long-used methods and interpretations. In a certain church during a Decision Day service a junior boy responded to the appeal to begin the Christian life. The pastor of the church immediately after received a severely-worded letter from the father of the boy denouncing him for causing the boy to take the step, saying that the child was not old enough to understand it, and that he wanted him to decide such important matters after he had reached the years of discretion. Then the pastor took down the church record and found that,—a few years before—the little boy had been baptized, and recalled that on that occasion certain pledges were made by the father that “in every way, by precept

and example," he as a parent would "seek to lead him into the love of God and the service of our Lord Jesus Christ." He then wrote the father a letter and called his attention to the promises made concerning the religious education of the boy, and urged upon him the complete fulfillment of these vows.

This experience,—in which the home failed to coöperate with the Church in the saving of the young,—reminds the writer of these lines of instances in which he has keenly felt the lack of interest of the stalwart people of the Church in efforts made for the capture of the youth of the community for service in the Kingdom of Christ. Either on the ground of the expense of an attractive recreational program, or because the methods of attracting young people to the services were out of the ordinary, or the complaint that other forms of church work were neglected, the efforts of those who were interested in such work were frowned upon. After a few years of a pastorate that resulted in gathering large numbers of the most hopeful youth into the Church by these very methods, another pastor more conservative appears and with the change of leadership much of the work so well begun is left to perish from lack of further care. Such experiences reveal the necessity of special training on the part of the ministry for the task of the religious nurture of the young, as well as the need of an educational campaign among the laity concerning the conservation of youth for the Church of Christ.



There is perhaps no hindrance to the Church's continuous success in handling young people that is so patent to the onlooker as the kaleidoscopic changes of pastorate which so often occur, especially in the middle west and beyond. In one western conference of the Methodist Church the conference statistician shows that the average pastorate is eighteen months. In another conference of two hundred and fifty ministers over half the churches changed pastors in a recent year. It can doubtless be proven by statistics from other denominations that the short pastorate is an affliction from which they also suffer. No interest of the community's religious life is so sensitive to these changes as the young people's work. An echo of such a pathetic condition came to my notice a short time ago in a letter from an adolescent schoolgirl to her friend in another city. A former pastor, who had won the hearts of youth and drawn them to his church by attractive picture and story methods, had been succeeded by another pastor of a different type, and the popular pastor's youthful friend writes as follows:

"We sure miss the pictures and other things up here. That story Mr. A—— was telling from week to week I liked awfully well,—but I didn't get to hear it all. Everything is now so formal and stiff here. We were talking the other day,—and I said, I liked to hear Mr. A—— preach because he told about his boyhood days and told stories, and—I don't know, he was always smiling. This preacher always talks about things over in Jerusalem and Egypt and places I never expect to see or have any-



thing to do with, and I can't get any more sense out of it than a man in the moon."

It is possible, especially in smaller towns and outlying communities, that the community spirit toward young life and the more progressive methods of ministering to youth may be cruelly indifferent if not strongly antagonistic. The element which is in the way of all progress, whether material, intellectual or spiritual is thus characterized by Dr. Charles Stelzle, a well-known religious and social worker, who describes some things he saw while on a recent Chautauqua lecturing trip:

"The average small town is hindered by the smug, self-satisfied group who are quite content with things as they are; who are afraid of discussion of any sort because it may disturb their personal relationships and make them think more deeply about modern social questions. They are afraid they may have to change their manner of living, and this they do not wish to do because they are now quite comfortable. Meanwhile these people are influential enough to kill off the preacher who is objectionable to them. They can easily shut out a lecturer who brings what is to them an objectionable message. Indeed there is no situation in the town which they may not dominate. This particular group constitutes the most perilous element in society to-day, so far as real progress in the small towns is concerned."

Faith in the common people as well as our confidence in the powers that are eternal makes us believe that in spite of the influence of this particular brand of social and religious reactionaries, a considerable portion of the Church will respond to

a proper presentation of the claims of the newer and larger program of Christian endeavour. This author wishes to record here his appreciation of the many loyal souls among the maturer portion of the Church who have faithfully seconded his efforts for the saving of the youth in the local fields where he has laboured. Though winter be upon their heads the birds of springtime sing within their hearts and their arms are open to welcome youth to the Church that is yet to be.

The rank and file of the Church however must be awakened to this same sympathy with youth and to the recognition of the value of an enlarged and advanced program for the Christian Church. Dr. Walter Athearn recently said: "There should be launched at once a nation-wide propaganda designed to give the Church a conscience on the subject of religious education." When the Church can be made to see that the training of the young in morals and religion is a vital thing, and that the Spirit of God rests upon and blesses the teaching of spiritual truths to the child *before* he has gone astray in even greater measure than upon the preaching of Scriptural truth to the individual *after* he has gone astray, it will then be willing to invest time and effort in an adequate teaching program. The peril of spiritual illiteracy which threatens us as a nation should arouse the Church and its constituency, as well as every other moral force in our communities, to a sacrificial outlay of money and consecrated personal effort which will turn the tide toward godliness and spiritual intelligence.

A changed conception of the Church itself will have to take place in the minds of the congregation. When talking with a young physician regarding his non-attendance at church, he jokingly remarked that his mother attended church and represented the family in this particular. Then, in the same vein, he added, "In my business I feel that I do pretty well if I can get a chance to doctor one member of the family." The fault with his logic was that he thought of the church as a hospital where the spiritually deficient are under treatment. I reminded him that the church is a school, and that all have need of its training and development.

With this changed thought concerning the church's mission even the architecture of the edifice may need remodeling to accommodate it to the purposes of a school. The superintendency and care of such an institution will doubtless require more than the labours of one pastor and the unpaid services of his wife. The local church may have to invest in experts of various kinds at adequate salaries, and provide the most modern equipment. No investment in money or men can be too great when the issues at stake are considered. When Horace Mann made a speech at the laying of the corner-stone of an institution for the reformation of wayward boys, he said that if only one boy were saved the effort would be worth all it cost. Some one asked him afterward if that statement was not an exaggerated one. His reply was, "Not if it were my boy."

With all our efforts for the religious education



of the masses we must be conscious of the fact that everything fails unless individual Christian character is considered. Society is made up of individual units and the problems of life will not be completely solved until each unit is correctly placed. Possibly there is danger that in the effort to get away from the objectionable features of an individualistic Christianity we shall forget the application of truth to the personal life. Great evangelistic movements which seek to deal with men in the mass, large educational and missionary advances, schemes for social uplift of various character,—may all fail because of the lack of the personal touch.

The youth who seriously attempts to reach the spiritual goal of a consecrated and serviceful life will find many hands extended to help him on his way. Even the unfortunate one who has wandered from childhood virtue and suffers in court and prison the penalty of his wrong-doing has a friendlier judge and kindlier keepers than a generation ago. Nature, as though in accord with this wise policy, has long been more friendly to youth than to old age. A witty newspaper writer says, "You seldom see an old man who is enthusiastic about winter." But youth delights in such old-fashioned sports as snowballing, skating and sliding. Spring, with its first flowers, and summer with its dreamy atmosphere and outdoor opportunities for labour and play, accord with the spirit of the young. Every bird that sings awakens a song of response in the soul of youth, and every



wind that blows sweeps across the heart strings of childhood awakening waves of melody which delight even the sensitive ear of age. The world which we commonly count as practical,—the world of trade, and the life of labour,—stretches out inviting arms to youth with a promise of golden reward. The world of thought and intellectual training,—which speaks of fitness for duty and the delights of fame,—calls with insistent voice. With such a goodly heritage and such alluring prospects the youth cannot be indifferent to his own interior resources and the eternal values of life.

The young person who has recognized in the years of childhood his place in the Kingdom of God may find by an introspective view as the years of youth come on that his personal dedication to Christ is severely tested by foes without and seemingly unfriendly forces within. The time may come when everything which formerly seemed solid and substantial will tremble beneath his feet. A certain fundamental truth will be of great value to youth in this time of need. The teacher of youth can assist in settling and solidifying Christian faith by showing how much the *will* has to do with the religious life. Doubtless there are many who go through years of Christian life subject to the bondage which an over-emotional type of Christianity has forced upon them, with little appreciation of the power for righteousness which abides within the energy of their own wills. The cultivation of the human will and its importance to Christianity should be magnified by religious teach-

ers in a much greater degree than has usually been the case. It was the heart purpose of a captive youth in a far country that enabled Daniel to stand as an example of fidelity to the faith of his fathers. The reception of the Gospel message was conditioned by the Master Himself on the attitude of the human will when He said, "If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching."

That conception of the Christian life which identifies it with a personal devotion to a Divine Friend, instead of an adherence to a set of laws or an acceptance of a formal creed tends also to simplify the matter of Christian living. The youth—in whom the element of hero-worship is strong—will readily respond to the appeal of personality, and when the Christian life is simplified to this degree it becomes most like that which the Master taught His disciples by the new title which He conferred upon them when He said, "I have called you friends."

In the memorable closing week of the Master's earthly ministry He seemed to have specially valued the opportunity of being with His friends—perhaps because He was so soon to leave them. He had many long talks with His disciples in their favourite trysting places, and each night He went over the hill from the city of His fathers to lodge in the humble home of a young man friend of His at Bethany. The brother and the two younger sisters,—doubtless long orphaned,—did not feel alone in the world when He was near. Each night they watched for His coming, and each morning

they saw with reluctance His departure for a day of teaching in the temple courts of the Holy City. But one night,—though the sisters watched long, and the brother went to seek Him,—He did not come.

That was the night in which the Great Friend was betrayed by the perfidy of a false disciple into the hands of those who had long been seeking His life. His fearlessness in condemning the sins of hypocritical pretenders, His faithfulness to the common people, and His fidelity to His high revelation of the spiritual life; these all aroused the bitterness of His foes, and the night closed in about Him. The formalities of the trial being over, the indignities of the crown of thorns and the purple robe being past, He was led forth to Calvary. Upon the barbarous cross, an instrument of torture which He transformed to a sign of triumph by the incident of His death, He gave up His life with a prayer for His foes upon His lips.

The culmination of the life of Jesus on the cross, and the memories of His resurrection appearances to His friends, as well as the crowded years of His teaching and travels, are the sources from which we draw our inspiration for a life in likeness to His own. The disciples entered into the life of the Master as one understands and enters into the life of his friend. Their fellowship with Him was so real that they did not look upon Him as really absent from them. Indeed, He had sent them forth upon a mission to the ends of the earth and promised them the constant solace of His presence.

Sustained by His Spirit and encouraged by His example they went forth to build for the days that were yet to dawn. We have entered into their labours and the legacies of their faith are ours. As we learn and teach in the present age, let us so labour that the coming day may see the vision of our completed task,—that the Youth of To-day may be fully prepared for the service they shall render in the Life of To-morrow.





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